

X
THERON and ASPASIO:

OR R. DODSON. 1807*

S E R I E S

OF

1474. aa. 7.

D I A L O G U E S

A N D

L E T T E R S,

U P O N T H E

Most *Important* and *Interesting* SUBJECTS.

I N T H R E E V O L U M E S.

B Y J A M E S H E R V E Y, A. M.

Late Rector of *Weston-Favell*, in *Northamptonshire*.

*For Zion's sake will I not hold my Peace, and for Jerusalem's
sake I will not rest, until the Righteousness thereof go forth
as Brightness, and the Salvation thereof as a Lamp that
burneth. Isai. lxii. 1.*

V O L. III.

T H E F I F T H E D I T I O N.

L O N D O N:

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and *Crown*, in *St. Paul's Church-yard*.

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R. DODSON 1807



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L E T T E R VI.

THERON to ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

THE last Evening was one of the finest I ever saw. According to Custom, I made an Excursion into the open Fields; and wanted nothing to complete the Satisfaction, but my Friend's Company *. I could not but observe, how much your improving Conversation heightened the Charms of Nature. When Religion applied Philosophy, every Thing was *instructive*, as well as *pleasing*.—Not a Breeze swept over the Plains, to clear the Sky, and

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cool

* *Tu quod abes excepto, cætera latus.*

cool the Air; but it tended also to disperse our Doubts, and enliven our Faith in the Supreme All-sufficient GOOD.—Not a Cloud tinged the Firmament with radiant Colours, or amused the Sight with romantic Shapes, but We beheld a Picture of the present World. Its *fading* Acquisitions, and *fantastic* Joys were pourtrayed, in the mimic Forms, and the transitory Scene.—Even the weakest of the Insect-tribe, that skim the Air in sportive Silence, addressed Us with the strongest Incitements, and gave Us the loudest Calls, to be *active* in our Day, and *useful* in our Generation. They cried, at least when You lent them your Tongue,

*Such is vain Life, an idle Flight of Days,
A still delusive Round of sickly Joys,
A Scene of little Cares, and trifling Passions,
If not ennobled by the Deeds of Virtue.*

How often, at the Approach of sober Eve, have We sauntered through the dusky Glade. Observing the last Remains of Light, now impurpling the Western Clouds; now faintly gleaming on the Mountain's Brow; now creeping insensibly from all the shaded Landscape.—How often have We stole along the Cloysters of some leafy Bower; attentive to the Tale of a *querulous* Current. That seemed to be struck with Horror, at the awful Gloom; and complained with heavier Murmurs, as it passed under the blackening Shades, and along the Root-obstructed Channel.—Or else, far from the babbling Brook, and softly treading the grassy Path, We listened to the *Nightingale's* Song. While every Gale held its Breath, and all the Leaves forbore their Motion,

Motion, that they might neither drown nor interrupt the melodious Woe.—From both which pensive Strains, You endeavoured to temper and chastise the exuberant Gaiety of my Spirits. You convinced me, that *true* Joy is a serious Thing *: is the Child of sedate Thought, not the Spawn of intemperate Mirth: nursed, not by the Sallies of dissolute Merriment, but by the Exercise of serene Contemplation.

Sometimes, at the gladsome Return of Morn, we have ascended an airy Eminence; and hailed the new-born Day; and gazed the Dew-bright Earth; and followed, with our delighted Eye, the Mazes of some glittering Stream.—Here *rustling*, with impetuous Fury, over the Mountain's Summit; tumbling from Rock to Rock; and roaring down the craggy Steep. Impatient, as it were, to get free from such rugged Paths, and mingle itself with the adjacent Mead.—There, slackening its headlong Career, and smoothing its Eddies, into a glassy Surface, and a gentle Flow. While, deep embosomed in the verdant Soil, it *winds* through the cherished and smiling Herbage. Sometimes, lost amidst closing Willows; sometimes, issuing with fresh Lustre from the verdant Arch; always, roving with an Air of amorous Complacency, as though it would kiss the fringed Banks, and caress the flowery Glebe.—Reminded, by this watery Monitor, of that Constancy and Vigour, with which the Affections should move towards the great *Center* of Happiness, *CHRIST JESUS*—of that determined Ardour, with which we should break through the Entanglements of Temptation, and Obstacles of

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* *Res severa est verum Gaudium.* SEN.

the World, in order to reach our everlasting *Rest*—and of the mighty Difference between the turbulent, the frothy, the precipitate Gratifications of Vice, and the calm, the substantial, the permanent Delights of *Religion*.

Or else, with careless Step, We have rambled along the Fields. Sometimes, prying into the secret Shade, or hiding Ourselves in the sequestered Vale. Sometimes, We have roved again on the upland Plains; with eager Views surveying the universal Prospect; and even devouring the Beauties of Nature, or, as the Scripture speaks, *taking them with our Eyes* *. Never weary of admiring the Magnificence and Glory of the Creation. An endless Variety of graceful Objects, and delightful Scenes! Each soliciting our chief Regard; every one worthy of our whole Attention; all conspiring to touch the Heart with a mingled Transport of Wonder, of Gratitude, and of Joy.—So that we have returned from our rural Expedition, not as the *Spendthrift* from the Gaming-table, cursing his Stars, and raving at his ill Luck; gulled of his Money, and the derided Dupe of Sharpers. Not as the *Libertine* from the House of Wantonness †, surfeited

* Job xl. 24.

† *Salomon*, in order to deter unwary Youth from those Sinks of Uncleanness, represents the Harlot under the Character of a pestilent Hag, or baleful Sorceress. *Her Feet go down to Death*; Prov. v. 5. *Her House is the high Road to Hell*; Prov. vii. 27. *yea, her Guests are in the Depths of Hell*; Prov. ix. 18.—The second Clause seems to be emphatical. The original Expression is in the plural Number דרכי. I choose therefore to render it, not simply *The Road*, but more largely *The high Road*: from which many other Ways of Guilt branch out, in which many other Paths of Ruin coincide. There, Murder is often

feited with the rank Debauch, dogged by Shame, goaded by Remorse, with a thousand recent Poisons tingling in his Veins. But we returned, as Ships of Commerce from the *golden* Continent, or the *spicy* Islands, with new Accessions of sublime Improvement, and solid Pleasure: With a deeper Veneration for the Almighty CREATOR; with a warmer Sense of his unspeakable Favours; and with a more inflamed Desire, “to know him now by Faith, and after this Life to have the Fruition of his glorious GODHEAD.”

Sometimes, with an agreeable Relaxation, we have transferred our Cares, from the Welfare of the Nation, to the Flourishing of the Farm; and, instead of enacting Regulations for the civil Community, we have planned Schemes for the Cultivation of our Ground, and the Prosperity of our Cattle.—Instead of attending to the Course of Fleets, and the Destination of Armies, We have directed the Plough, where to rend the grassy Turf; or taught the Honey-suckle to wind round the Arbour, and the Jessamine to climb upon the Wall.—Instead of interposing our friendly Offices, to reconcile contending Kingdoms; We have formed a *Treaty of Coalition*, between the

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stranger

often known, to drench her Dagger in Blood; and Robbery forms the rash Resolve, which ends in the ignominious Halter. There, Intemperance daily brews the Bowl, which enervates the Constitution, and transforms the Man into a Beast. While Disease, pale cadaverous noisome Disease, anticipates the Putrefaction of the Grave, and causes the wretched *Martyrs of Vice* to rot even above Ground.—Well may every one, who loves Life, and would fain see good Days, cry out with a Mixture of Detestation and Dread; “O my Soul, come not thou into their horrid Haunts!”

Dii meliora Piiis, Erroremque Hostibus illum! VIRG.

stranger Cyon, and the adopting Tree; and, by the remarkable Melioration of the ensuing Fruit, demonstrated (would contending Empires regard the Precedent) what Advantages flow from pacific Measures, and an amicable Union.—Instead of unraveling the Labyrinths of State, and tracing the Finesses of foreign Courts; We have made ourselves acquainted with the *Politics* of Nature, and observed, how wonderfully, how mysteriously, that great Projectress acts.—In this Place she rears a vast Trunk, and unfolds a Multiplicity of Branches, from one small Berry. She qualifies, by her amazing Operations, a few contemptible Acorns, that were formerly carried in a Child's Lap, to bear the *British* Thunder round the Globe, and secure to our Island the Sovereignty of the Ocean.—In another Place, she produces from a dry Grain, *first the green Blade; then the turgid Ear; afterwards the full-grown and ripened Corn in the Ear* *. Repaying, with exact Punctuality, and with lavish Usury, the Husbandman's Toil, and the Husbandman's Loan: causing, by a most surprising Resurrection, the Death of one Seed, to be fruitful in the Birth of Hundreds.

But I forget your Caution, *Aspasio*; forget, how kindly you have checked me, when I have been haranguing upon, I know not what, Powers and Works of Nature: Whereas, it is GOD who *worketh hitherto* †: who to this Day exerts, and to the End of Time will exert, that secret but unre-mitted Energy, which is the Life of this majestic System, and the Cause of all its stupendous Operations.—Let this shew you, how much I want my Guide, my Philosopher, and Friend. Without his prompt-

* Mark iv. 28.

† John v. 17.

ing Aid, my Genius is dull; my Reflections are aukward; and my religious Improvements jejune; somewhat like the *bungling* Imitations of the Tool, compared with the *masterly* Effects of Vegetation.— However, I will proceed. Yet, not from any View of informing my *Aspasio*, but only to draw a Bill upon his Pen; and lay him under an Obligation to enrich me with another Letter, upon the grand and excellent Subject of his last.

Art is dim-sighted in her Plans, and defective even in her most elaborate Effays. But *Nature*, or rather Nature's sublime AUTHOR, is indeed a Designer and a *Workman* * *that need not be ashamed* †. His Eye strikes out ten thousand elegant Models, and his Touch executes all with inimitable Perfection.—What an admirable Specimen is Here, of the divine Skill, and of the divine Goodness! This teraqueous Globe is intended, not only for a Place of Habitation, but for a Storehouse of Conveniencies. If We examine the several Apartments of our great Abode; if We take a general *Inventory* of our common Goods; We shall find Reason to be charmed with the Displays, both of nice Oeconomy, and of boundless Profusion.

Observe the *Surface* of this universal Messuage. The Ground, coarse as it may seem, and trodden by every Foot, is nevertheless the *Laboratory*, where the most exquisite Operations are performed; the *Shop*, if I may so speak, where the finest Manufactures

* *A Designer and a Workman*; this seems to be the precise Meaning of the Apostle's Words, *Τεχνίτης καὶ ἀναμεικτός*. Heb. xi. 10. *Builder and Maker*, are too similar. *Preceptor and Architect*, would be more distinct.

† 2 Tim. ii. 15.

tures are wrought. Though all Generations have, each in their Order, been accommodated by its Productions; though all Nations under Heaven are, to this very Day, supplied by its Liberalities, it still continues inexhausted. Is a Resource, always new; a Magazine, never to be drained.

As this is a Property very remarkable, and unspeakably valuable, it deserves our more particular Regard. Was it reversed, what would become of the World, both rational, animal, and vegetable? —In commercial Affairs, *Usury* is looked upon as the Canker of an Estate. A corroding Worm, which eats into the Heart, and consumes the very Vitals, of our Substance. The Earth borrows immense Sums yearly. These She repays with an Interest prodigiously large, almost incredible. Yet is She never impoverished. Or if impoverished in some Degree, the Repose of a single Year, with a little Cultivation from the Owner, is sufficient for the Reparation of all her Losses.—Old Age weakens the most vigorous Animals. Even the hardiest Oaks are impaired by Time. A State of Barrenness and Decay awaits them all; and admits neither of Prevention, nor of Remedy. But the Earth, which is the Mother and the Nurse of Us all, is subject to none of these Infirmities. She is now almost six thousand Years old, yet discovers no Sign of a *broken* Constitution, nor any one Symptom of *exhausted* Strength. In Spring, She blooms like a Virgin; in Summer, she sparkles like a Bride; in Autumn, she teems like a Matron. If grey Hairs seem to be upon Her, during the wintry Months; She is sure to drop them, when the Frosts are gone, and the Sun approaches. She never fails, at that Season,

Season, to re-assume all the Graces, and to re-exert all the Vigour of Youth.—Though She has been pregnant with thousands and thousands of Vintages and Harvests; though She has suckled unnumbered Millions of green and flowery Families; her Womb is as strong and lively to conceive*, her Breasts are as copious and milky to nourish, as if She was but just delivered of her First-born.—To what is this unequalled and never-ceasing Fertility owing? What, but that mighty Word, proceeding from the Mouth of JEHOVAH; *While the Earth remaineth, Seed-time and Harvest shall not cease* †. How short the Decree, but how long and lasting its Efficacy! It has reached to this Hour; it will reach to distant Ages; it will extend itself to the very End of Time.

The *Unevenness* of the Ground, far from being a Blemish or a Defect; heightens its Beauty, and augments its Usefulness.—*Here*, it is scooped into deep and sheltered Vales, almost constantly covered with a spontaneous Growth of Verdure: which, all tender and succulent, composes an easy Couch, and yields the most agreeable Fodder, for the various Tribes of Cattle.—*There*, it is extended into a wide, open, champain Country: which, annually replenished with the Husbandman's Seed, shoots into a copious Harvest. A Harvest, not only of that principal *Wheat*, which strengthens our Heart, and is the

* St. Chrysostom thought this a wonderful Circumstance, and has touched it in one of his most celebrated Orations. Εὐνοήσων μοι το καλλος τε θραν, ποσον εχει χρονον, και εκ ημαυραθη, αλλ' ωσπερ Γημερον κατασκευασθεις, εως εστι αποσιλωσιν της γης την δυναμιν, πως εκ ηλωνται αυτης η γαστη τοσυντοι τιλωσα χρονον. Ανθριαντ. ι.

† Gen. viii. 22.

the Staff of our Life; but of the *appointed Barley* * also, and of various other Sorts of Grain. Which yield an excellent Food for our Animals; and either enable them to dispatch our Drudgery, or else fatten their Flesh for our Tables.

The Furrows, obedient to the Will of Man, vary their Produce †. They bring forth a Crop of tall, flexile, slender Plants †: whose thin filmy Coat, dried, attenuated, and skilfully manufactured, transforms itself into some of the most necessary *Accommodations* of Life, and genteelest *Embellishments* of Society.—It is wove into ample Volumes of Cloth; which, fixed to the Mast, give Wings to our Ships, and waft them to the Extremities of the Ocean.—It is twisted into vast Lengths of Cordage; which add Nerves to the Crane, and lend Sinews to the Pulley; or else, adhering to the Anchor, they fasten the Vessel even on the fluctuating Element, and secure its Station even amidst driving Tempests.—It furnishes the Duchess with her costly Head-dress, and delicately fine Ruffles. No less strong than neat, it supplies the Plowman with his coarse Frock, and the Sailor with his clumsy Trowsers. Its Fibres,

* *Isai. xxviii. 25.* *Theron* adopts our received Translation. Which seems, like the Trumpet giving an uncertain Sound, to perplex, rather than inform. We know not, what to understand by the Word *appointed*, when used in this Connection. Whereas, the true Interpretation of the Original, is, I think, as follows; וְשַׁעֲדָהּ נִסְמָן וְכִסְמָתָהּ נִבְלָתוֹ *Et Hordeo signata est & Quæ Meta sua.* *A Proper Place is assigned both for the Barley and the Rye.*

† One may venture to say of the Earth, with regard to its vegetable Operation;

Omnia transformat sese in Miracula Rerum.

‡ Flax and Hemp.

bres, artfully ranged by the Operations of the Loom, cover our Tables with a graceful Elegance, and surround our Bodies with a cherishing Warmth. On this the Painter spreads the Colours, which enchant the Eye; in this the Merchant packs the Wares, which enrich the World.

Yonder, the *Hills*, like a grand Amphitheatre, arise. Amphitheatre! All the pompous Works of *Roman* Magnificence, are less than Mole-banks, are mere Cockle-shells, compared with those majestic Elevations of the Earth. Some clad with mantling Vines; some crowned with towering Cedars; some ragged with mishapen Rocks, or yawning with subterraneous Dens. Whose rough and inaccessible Craggs, whose hideous and gloomy Cavities, are not only a continual Refuge for the wild Goats, but have often proved an Asylum to persecuted Merit*, and a Safeguard to the most valuable Lives.

At a greater Distance, the *Mountains* lift their frozen Brows, or penetrate the Clouds with their aspiring Peaks. Their frozen Brows *arrest* the roving, and *condense* the rarefied Vapours †. Their stony Bowels, formed into Caverns, collect the dripping Treasures, and send them abroad, in gradual Communications, by trickling Springs. While their steep Sides *precipitate* the watery Stores; rolling them on with such a forcible Impulse ‡, that they

* To David, from Saul's Malice; to Elijah, from Jezebel's Vengeance; to many of the primitive *Christians*, from the Rage of persecuting Emperors: they wandered in Deserts and in Mountains, in Dens and Caves of the Earth. Heb. xi. 38.

† Therefore styled—*Nimbosa Cacumina Montis*. VIRG.

‡ It is observable, that the largest Rivers in the World, those which roll the heaviest Burden of Waters, and per-
form

they never intermit their unwearied Course, till they have swept through the most extensive Climes, and regained their native Seas.

The *Vineyard* swells into a Profusion of Clusters: some tinged with the deepest Purple, and delicately clouded with Azure: some, clad with a whitish transparent Skin, which shews the tempting Kernels, lodged in luscious Nectar.—The Vine requires a strong Reflection of the Sun-beams, and a very large Proportion of Warmth. How commodiously do the Hills and Mountains minister to this Purpose! May We not call those vast Declivities, the *Garden-walls* of Nature? Which, far more effectually than the most costly Glasses, or most artful Green-houses, concenter the solar Heat, and complete the Maturity of the Grape. Distending it with a Liquor of the finest Scent, the most agreeable Relish, and the most exalted Qualities: such as dissipate Sadness, and inspire Vivacity: such as
make

form the most extensive Circuit through the Nations, generally take their Rise from Mountains. The *Rhine*, the *Rhone*, and the *Po*, all descend from the *Alps*. The *Tygris* derives its rapid Flood, from the everlasting Snows, and steep Ridges of *Niphates*. And, to mention but one more Instance, the River *Amazones*, which pours itself through a Multitude of Provinces, and waters near eighteen hundred Leagues of Land, has its Urn in the Caverns, and its Impetus from the Precipices, of that immense Range of Hills, the *Andes*.

If the Reader is inclined to see the Origin and Formation of Rivers described, in all the Sublimity of Diction, and with all the Graces of Poetry, He may find this Entertainment in Mr. *Thomson's* Autumn, *Lin.* 781. last Edit.

Amazing Scene! behold, the Glooms disclose.

I see the Rivers in their infant Beds!

Deep, deep I hear them, lab'ring to get free! &c.

make glad the Heart of Man, and most sweetly prompt, both his Gratitude and his Duty, to the Munificent GIVER.—I grieve, and I blush for my Fellow-creatures, that Any should *abuse* this Indulgence of Heaven. That Any should turn so valuable a Gift of GOD into a detestable Instrument of Sin! Should turn the most exhilarating of Cordials into Poison, Madness, and Death.

The *Kitchen-garden* presents Us with a new Train of Benefits. In its blooming Ornaments, what unaffected Beauty! In its culinary Productions, what diversified Riches! It ripens a Multitude of nutritional Esculents, and almost an equal Abundance of medicinal Herbs; distributing Refreshments to the Healthy, and administering Remedies to the Sick.—The *Orchard*, all fair, and ruddy, and bowing down beneath its own delicious Burden, gives Us a fresh Demonstration of our CREATOR's Kindness. Regales Us, first, with all the Delicacies of Summer Fruits; next, with the more lasting Succession of Autumnal Dainties.

What is Nature, but a Series of Wonders, and a Fund of Delights! That such a Variety of Fruits, so beautifully coloured, and so elegantly shaped; so charmingly flavoured, and enriched with such admirable Juices; should arise from the Earth! Than which nothing is more insipid, sordid, and despicable.—I am struck with pleasing Astonishment, at the *Cause* of these fine Effects! I am no less surprised, at the *Manner* of bringing them into Existence. I take a Walk in my Garden, or a Turn through my Orchard, in the Month of *December*. There stand several Logs of Wood. Some, of stately Height, and diffusive Spread. Others, contracted

tracted into Dwarfs, or disposed along the Espalier. All, naked and un-ornamented; all, fastened to the Ground, and neither endued with Sense, nor capable of Motion. No human Hand will touch them; no human Aid will succour them. Yet, in a little Time, they are beautified with Blossoms; after which, they are covered with Leaves; and, at last, they are loaded with mellow Treasures. With the downy Peach and the polished Plum; with the musky Apricot, and the juicy Pear; with the Cherry, and its coral Pendants, glowing through Lattices of Green,

and dark

Beneath her ample Leaf, the luscious Fig.

I have wondered at the Structure of my Watch; wondered more at the Description of the Silk-mills; most of all, at the Account of those prodigious Engines, invented by *Archimedes*. But what are all the Inventions of all the Geometricians and Mechanics in the World, compared with these inconceivably nice *Automata** of Nature! These *self-operating Machines*

* *Automata*, or *self-operating* Machines; not meant to set aside the Superintendency of Providence, but only to exclude the Co-operation of Man.

The Word *avtoματη* is used by our MASTER; is a very fine, and most expressive Word; for which Reasons, I have ventured to give it a Kind of *English* Naturalization. It signifies, says a *Greek* Scholiast, τὰς μηχανὰς, αὐτὰς αὐτὰς ἐκφύουσιν. See *Mark* iv. 28.—It is an Explication of that remarkable Phrase, which occurs in the *Mosaic* History of the Creation, אשר ברא אלהים לעשות Gen. ii. 3. Which GOD created and made, appears tautological, and is by no means an exact Translation. It should rather be interpreted, Which GOD created in order to make;

chines dispatch their Business, with a Punctuality that never mistakes, with a Dexterity that cannot be equalled. In Spring, they clothe themselves with such unstudied but exquisite Finery, as far exceeds the Embroidery of the Needle, or the Labours of the Loom. In Autumn, they present Us with such a Collation of Sweetmeats, and such Blandishments of Taste, as surpass whatever the most critical Luxury could prepare, or the most lavish Fancy imagine.—So that those *coarse* and *senseless* Logs, first decorate the divine Creation, then perform the Honours of the Table.

If, amidst these ordinary Productions of the Earth, GOD appears so *great in Counsel*, and so *mighty in Work* *: what may We expect to see, amidst the Palaces of Heaven; among the Hierarchies of Angels; and in that wonderful REDEEMER, who is, beyond all other Objects, beyond all other Manifestations, *the Wisdom of GOD*, and *the Power of GOD* †.

The *Forest* rears Myriads of massy Bodies. Which, though neither gay with Blossoms, nor rich with Fruits, supply Us with Ornaments, far more durable than the former; with Benefits, far more valuable than the latter. They supply Us with Timber of various Kinds, and of every desirable Quality ‡.—But who shall cultivate such huge Trees,
diffused

make; to make, by these prolific Instruments and producing Principles, a continual Succession of Animals, Vegetables, and Creatures.

* Jer. xxxii. 19.

† 1 Cor. i. 24.

‡ *Tully* has given Us an Abridgment of all the preceding Particulars. Which, I think, is one of the finest Landscapes in Miniature, that the descriptive Pen ever drew.

diffused over so vast a Space? The Toil were endless; the Task impossible. See therefore the all-wise and ever-gracious Ordination of Providence! They are so constituted, that they have no Need of the Spade, the Pruning-knife, or the Watering-pot. Nay, the little Services of Man would diminish, rather than augment their Dignity and their Usefulness. The more they are neglected, the better they thrive; scorning, as it were, to be dependent on any Hand, but the divine; and speaking, by their own native Grandeur, the transcendent Greatness of their PLANTER *.

When felled by the Axe, they are sawed into Beams, and sustain the Roofs of our Houses. They are fashioned into Carriages, and serve for the Conveyance of the heaviest Loads.—Their Substance so pliant, that they yield to the Chissel of the Turner, and are smoothed by the Plane of the Joiner; are wrought into the nicest Diminutions of Shape, and compose some of the finest Branches of household Furniture.—Their Texture so solid, that they form the most important Parts of those mighty Engines; which, adapting themselves to the Play of mechanic Powers, dispatch more Work in a single Hour, than could otherwise be accomplished in many Days.—At the same Time, their Pressure is so light, that

drew.—*Terra universa cernatur, vestita Floribus, Herbis, Arboribus, Frugibus; quorum omnium incredibilis Multitudo insatiabili Varietate distinguitur. Adde huc Fontium gelidas Perennitates, Liquores perlucidos Amnium, Riparum Vestitus viridissimos, Speluncarum concavas Altitudines, Saxorum Asperitates, impendentium Montium Altitudines, Immensitatesque Camporum.* De Nat. Deor. Lib. II.

* Chrysostom, making Mention of Trees, says; Τα μεν γαρ δια τε καρπε, τα δε δια τε μεσους, τα δε δια τε καλλος, αναπεμπει τω ποιησαντι την ευφημιαν.

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that they float upon the Waters; and glide along the Surface, almost with as much Agility, as the finny Fry glance through the Deep.—Thus, while they impart Magnificence to Architecture, and bestow numberless Conveniencies on the Family; they constitute the very Basis of Navigation, and give Life to our domestic Trade, give Being to the Commerce of Nations.

Amidst the inaccessible Recesses of the Forest, an Habitation is assigned to those *ravenous* Beasts, whose Appearance would be frightful, and their Neighbourhood dangerous. There, the sternly majestic Lion rouses Himself from his Den; stalks through the midnight Shades; and awes the savage Herds with his Roar. There, the fiery Tyger springs upon his Prey, and the gloomy Bear trains up her Whelps. There, the swift Leopard ranges, the grim Wolf prowls, and both in quest of Murder and Blood.—Were these horrid Animals to dwell in our Fields, what *Havock* would they make? What *Consternation* would they spread? To prevent such mischievous Consequences, the almighty RULER saith; *I have made the Wilderness their House, and the barren Land their Dwelling* *. In Obedience to this Decree, they banish themselves from the Seat of Society, and from the Scenes of Fertility. They even bury themselves, in the deepest Solitudes of the Desert. While the Ox, the Horse, and the serviceable Quadrupeds, live under our Inspection, and keep within our Call: profiting Us as much by their Presence, as the others oblige Us by their Absence.

B 2

If,

* Job xxxix. 6.

If, at any Time, those shaggy Monsters make an Excursion into the habitable World, it is when Man retires to his Chamber, and sleeps in Security. The Sun, which invites other Creatures abroad, gives them a Signal and a Command to retreat. *The Sun ariseth, and they get them away, and lay them down in their Dens* *. Strange! That the orient Light, which is so pleasing to Us, should strike such Terror on them! Should, more effectually than a Legion of Guards, put them all to flight, and clear the Country of those formidable Enemies!

If We turn our Thoughts to the *Atmosphere*, We find a most curious and exquisite Apparatus of *Air*. Which, because no Object of our Sight, is seldom observed, and little regarded; yet is a Source of innumerable Advantages. And all these Advantages are fetched (which is almost incredible) from the very Jaws of Ruin. My Meaning may be obscure, therefore I explain myself.

We live plunged, if I may so speak, in an Ocean of Air. Whole *Pressure*, upon a Person of moderate Size, is equal to the Weight of *twenty thousand Pounds*. Tremendous Consideration! Should the Ceiling of a Room, or the Roof of a House, fall upon Us with half that Force, what destructive Effects must ensue. Such a Force would infallibly drive the Breath from our Lungs, or break every Bone in our Bodies. Yet, so admirably has the Divine Wisdom contrived this aerial Fluid, and so nicely counterpoised its dreadful Power, that We receive not the slightest Hurt; We suffer no manner of Inconvenience; We even *enjoy* the Load.

Instead

* Psal. civ. 22.

Instead of being as a Mountain on our Loins, it is like Wings to our Feet, or like Sinews to our Limbs. —Is not this *common* Ordination of Providence, thus considered, somewhat like the Miracle of the burning Bush; whose tender and combustible Substance, though in the Midst of Flames, was neither consumed nor injured *? Is it not almost as marvellous, as the Prodigy of the three *Hebrew* Youths? Who walked in the fiery Furnace, without having a Hair of their Heads singed, or so much as the Smell of Fire passing on their Garments †?—Surely, We have Reason to say unto GOD; *O! how terrible, yet how beneficent, art Thou in thy Works!*

The Air, though too weak to support *our* Flight, is a Thoroughfare for innumerable Wings. Here the whole Commonwealth of *Birds* take up their Abode. Here they lodge and expatiate, beyond the Reach of their Adversaries. Were they to run upon the Earth, they would be exposed to ten thousand Dangers, without proper Strength to resist them, or sufficient Speed to escape them. Whereas, by mounting the Skies, and *lifting themselves up on high*, they are secure from Peril, *they scorn the Horse and his Rider* ‡.—Some of them perching upon the Boughs, others soaring amidst the Firmament, entertain Us with their *Notes*. Which are musical and agreeable ||, when heard at this convenient Distance;

* Exod. iii. 2.

† Dan. iii. 27.

‡ Job

xxxix. 18.

|| *Musical and agreeable*—Of this Kind are almost all their Notes; formed to charm the Ear, and inspire Delight. If indeed the Turtle is melancholy, and the Raven solemn, they are only like the Base in a Concert; or as Discords judiciously intermingled, in a fine Piece of

Distance; but would be noisy and importunate, if brought near to our Ears.—Here, many of those feathered Families reside, which yield Us a delicious *Treat*; yet give Us no Trouble, put Us to no Expence, and, till the Moment We want them, are wholly out of our Way.

The Air, commissioned by its All-bountiful AUTHOR, charges itself with the Administration of several Offices, which are perfectly obliging, and no less serviceable to Mankind.—Co-operating with our Lungs, it *ventilates* the Blood, and refines our Fluids. It qualifies and attempers the vital Warmth; promotes and exalts the animal Secretions.—Many Days We might live, or even whole Months, without the Light of the Sun, or the Glimmering of a Star. Whereas, if We are deprived, only for a few Minutes, of this aerial Support, We sicken, We faint, We die.—The same *universal Nurse* has a considerable Share, in cherishing the several Tribes of Plants. It helps to transfuse vegetable Vigour into the Trunk of the Oak, and a blooming Gaiety into the Spread of the Rose.

The Air undertakes to convey to our Nostrils the extremely subtil *Effluvia*, which transpire from odoriferous Bodies. Those detached Particles are so imperceptibly small, that they would elude the most careful Hand, or escape the nicest Eye. But this trusty Depositary *receives* and *escorts* the invisible Vagrants, without losing so much as a single Atom. Entertaining Us, by this Means, with the delightful

Music. Which makes me wonder, that *Horace*, speaking of these sprightly Songsters, and their pleasing Harmony, should say;

Queruntur in Sylvis Aves.

ful Sensations, which arise from the Fragrance of Flowers; and admonishing Us, by the Transmission of offensive Smells, to withdraw from an unwholesome Situation, or beware of any pernicious Food.

The Air, by its undulating Motion, conducts to our Ear all the Diversities of *Sound*; and, thereby discharges the Duty of a most seasonable and faithful Monitor. As I walk across the Streets of *London*, with my Eye engaged on other Objects; a Dray, perhaps with all its Load, is driving down directly upon me. Or, as I ride along the Road, musing and unapprehensive, a Chariot and fix is whirling on, with a rapid Career, at the Heels of my Horse. The Air, like a *vigilant* Friend, in pain for my Welfare, immediately takes the Alarm: and, while the Danger is at a considerable Distance, dispatches a Courier to advertise me of the approaching Mischiefs. It even thunders in my Ear; and, with a *clamorous* but *kind* Importunity, urges me to be upon my Guard, and provide for my Safety.

The Air wafts to our Sense all the Modulations of *Music*, and the more agreeable Entertainments of refined Conversation. When *Myrtilla* strikes the silver Strings, and teaches the willing Harpsichord to warble with her CREATOR's Praise: when her sacred Sonata warms the Heart with Devotion, and wings our Desires to Heaven.—When *Cleora* tunes her Song, or the Nightingale imitates her enchanting Voice: when She heightens every melodious Note, with her adored REDEEMER's Name; and so smooths her charming Tones, so breathes her rapturous Soul; “that GOD's own Ear listens delighted.”—When Wisdom takes its

Seat on *Mitio's* Tongue; and flows, in perspicuous Periods, and instructive Truths, amidst the chosen Circle of his Acquaintance.—When Benevolence, associated with Persuasion, dwell on *Nicander's* Lips; and plead the Cause of injured Innocence, or oppressed Virtue.—When Goodness, leagued with Happiness, accompany *Eusebius* into the Pulpit; and reclaim the Libertine from the Slavery of his Vices; disengage the Infidel from the Fascination of his Prejudices; and so affectionately, so pathetically invite the whole Audience, to partake the unequalled Joys of pure Religion.—In all these Cases, the Air distributes every musical Variation with the utmost *Exactness*; and delivers the Speaker's Message, with the most punctual *Fidelity*. Whereas, without this Internuntio, all would be sullen and unmeaning Silence. We should lose both the Pleasure and the Profit; neither be charmed with the harmonious, nor improved by the articulate Accents.

The Air, when vague and unconfined, is so very gentle; that it sports, with the most inoffensive Wantonness, amidst *Ophelia's* Locks, and scarce disadjusts a single Curl. But, when collected and applied by the Contrivance of Man, it acts with such *prodigious Force*; as is sufficient to whirl round the hugest Wheels, though clogged with the most incumbering Loads. It makes the ponderous Millstones move as swiftly, as the Dancer's Heel: and the massy Beams play as nimbly, as the Musician's Finger.

If We climb, in Speculation, the higher Regions, We find an endless Succession of *Clouds*, fed by

by Evaporations from the Ocean.—The Clouds are themselves a Kind of Ocean, suspended in the Air with amazing Skill. They travel, in detached Parties, and in the Quality of *itinerant Cisterns*, round all the terrestrial Globe. They fructify, by proper Communications of Moisture, the spacious Pastures of the Wealthy; and gladden, with no less liberal Showers, the Cottager's little Spot. Nay, so condescending is the Benignity of their great PROPRIETOR, that they *satisfy the desolate and waste Ground; and cause, even in the most uncultivated Wilds, the Bud of the tender Herb to spring forth* *. That the Natives of the lonely Desert, those savage Herds which know no Master's Stall, may nevertheless experience the Care, and rejoice in the Bounty, of an All-supporting PARENT.

How wonderful! That the Water, which is much denser and far heavier than the Air, should rise into it; make its Way through it; and take a Station in the very uppermost Regions of it! This, One would imagine, were almost as impossible, as for the Rivers to run back to their Source. Yet Providence has contrived a Way, to render it not only practicable, but Matter of continual Occurrence.

How wonderful! That *pendant Lakes* should be diffused, or *liquid Mountains* heaped over our Heads; and both sustained in the thinnest Parts of the Atmosphere! We little think of that surprising Expedient, which, without Conduits of Stone, or Vessels of Brass, keeps such Loads of Water in a buoyant State. *Job* and *Elibu* considered this, and were struck with holy Admiration. *Dost thou know the Balancings*

* Job xxxviii. 27.

Balancings of the Clouds? How such ponderous Bodies are made to hang with an even Poise, and hover like the lightest Down? These are *the wondrous Works of HIM, who is perfect in Knowledge* *. *He bindeth up the Waters in his thick Clouds; and the Cloud, though nothing is more loose and fluctuating, becomes, by his Almighty Order, strong and tenacious as Casks of Iron; it is not rent † under all the Weight.*

When the Sluices are opened, and the Waters descend, We might reasonably suspect; that they would rush down in Cataracts, more rapid and impetuous, than the Mountain Torrent. Thus would they be dreadfully pernicious. They would destroy every Thing, where they happened to fall; and leave other Parts of the Ground, destitute of necessary Moisture.—Whereas, now, instead of such a disorderly and precipitate Effusion, they coalesce into *Globules*, and are dispensed in gentle *Showers*. They are often attenuated into the Smallness of a Hair ‡; they spread themselves, as if they were strained through the Orifices of the finest Watering-pot; and form those *small Drops of Rain, which the Clouds distil upon Man abundantly* ||. Thus, instead of drowning the Earth, and sweeping away its Fruits, they cherish universal Nature; and, in Conformity to the Practice of their great MASTER, distribute their humid Stores to Men, to Ani-

* Job xxxvii. 16.

† Job xxvi. 8.

‡ The *Hebrew* Words, which convey the Idea of gentle *Rain*, signify a Portion of Water, made small as a *Hair*, or divided into *Millions* of Parts, שְׁעָרִים וְרִבְבִּים דֶּנֶם Dent. xxxii. 2.

|| Job xxxvi. 28.

Animals, and Vegetables, as they are able to bear them *.

Besides the Reservoirs of Water, here are cantoned various Parties of *Winds*, mild or fierce, gentle or boisterous. Furnished with breezy Wings, to fan the glowing Firmament, and diffuse Refreshment on a fainting World: or else, fitted to act as an universal *Besom*; and, by sweeping the Chambers of the Atmosphere, to preserve the fine aerial Fluid free from Feculencies. Without this wholesome Agency of the Winds, the Air would stagnate; would soon become putrid; and surround Us, in the literal Sense of the Words, with *Darkness that might be felt* †. *London, Paris*, and all the great Cities in the World, instead of being the Seats of Elegance, would degenerate into Sinks of Corruption.

Let the Inhabitants of *Jamaica* or *Japan*, let the Natives of *Guinea* or *Peru*, express the Value of this elementary Gift. How could they subsist, in those torrid Regions, without this best of Visitants, the cool diurnal Breeze? Alas! how would their Blood boil; how would their Spirits fail; and their *Strength be dried up like a Potsherd*! Without this salutary Breeze, the Air would be liquid Fire; their Houses the Residence of Fevers; and their Clime, as it were, the Ante-chamber to Hell.—But the fresh and sprightly Gales constantly rise with the rising Sun; and ply the Fan, without Intermission, around both Men and Beasts. This qualifies and tempers the otherwise intolerable Heat; this sheds Comfort, and supports Health; this is, amidst their burning Abodes, the very Balm of Life.

* Mark iv. 33.

† Exod. x. 21.

Life.—Not all the aromatic Odours, nor all the ambrosial Sweets of those fruitful Islands, are half so agreeable to the Taste or the Smell, as these Gales are recreating and grateful to the Lungs. And what—Ah! what were all the Ivory and the Gold of those wealthy Continents? How dim their Lustre! How insignificant their Traffic! If separated from this incomparably better Commerce with the ever-undulating Sky!—Yet there is one Species of Commerce, one Kind of sacred Intercourse, preferable, infinitely preferable even to these sweet, sovereyn, elementary Refreshments. The Church seems to pant and gasp after it, as a thirsty Land. Her Wants I feel, and her Wishes I adopt. *Awake, O North-wind, and come thou South-wind; come, thou all-reviving, all-enlivening SPIRIT, and blow upon my Garden, or rather upon the poor, parched, barren Defart of my Soul; that the Spices, or some Savour of Righteousness and true Holiness, may flow out.*

At Sea, the Winds swell the Mariner's Sails, and speed his Course along the watery Way: speed it far more effectually, than a thousand Rowers, bending to their Strokes, and tugging at the Oar.—By Land, they perform the Office of an immense Seed-man, and scatter abroad the reproductive Principles of a Multitude of Plants; which, though the Staff of Life to many Animals, are too small for the Management, or too mean for the Attention of Man. *GOD bringeth the Winds out of his Treasuries **, is a very just and edifying Observation. Whether We consider it, as a Description of his absolute and uncontrollable Dominion over this potent Meteor;

* Psal. cxxxv. 7.

Meteor; *He bringeth; He maketh it to come*; like some tame sequacious Animal, which hearkens to a Word, or obeys the Nod. Or whether We contemplate the welcome and kindly Influence of the Meteor itself, on all the Face of Nature; He bringeth it, not from the Armoury, where the Weapons of Vengeance are deposited; but from *his Treasuries*, whence proceed the convenient, the beneficial, and the desirable.

Here are *Lightnings* stationed. Though dormant at present, they are in act to spring, and launch the livid Flame: whenever their piercing Flash is necessary. Necessary to destroy the sulphureous and pestilential Vapours; or to dislodge those floating Dregs, which might corrupt the Purity of the Æther, and obscure its more than crySTALLINE Transparency.—This fiercest of Fires (see the stupendous Operations of JEHOVAH!) is engendered by the coldest of Elements. That blazing Bolt, which cleaves the Forest Oaks with a Stroke; that penetrating Flame, which melts the Bars of Steel with a Touch; are the Offspring of Water, and issue from the Womb of a Cloud. *HE maketh Lightnings* *, saith the inspired Philosopher, not as an Efflux from the Sun; but (amazing Association!) as an Appendage or Concomitant *for the Rain*.

In the magnificent Arch of the Sky, is situate a radiant Orb, which enlightens the Tracts, cheers the Inhabitants, and colours all the Productions, of this habitable Globe. The Air, by a singular Address in managing the Rays, amplifies their Usefulness:

* Psal. cxxxv. 7.

fulness: its *reflecting* Power * augments that Heat, which is the Life of Nature; its *refracting* Power prolongs that Splendor, which is the Beauty of the Creation.—These Emanations of Light, though formed of inactive Matter, yet (astonishing Apparatus of eternal Wisdom!) are refined almost to the *Subtilty* of Spirit, and are scarce inferior even to Thought in *Speed*. By which Means, they spread themselves, with a Kind of instantaneous Swiftneſs, through the Circumference of a whole Hemisphere; and though they fill, wherever they pervade, yet they ſtraiten no Place, embarraſs no One, incumber Nothing.

These give the Diamond its Brilliancy, and the Velvet its Gloſs: to theſe the chearful Eye is obliged for its lively Sparkle, and the modeſt Cheek for its roſy Bluſh. Theſe, attending the judicious Touches of the Pencil, bid the Drapery flow, and the embodied

* The Air is a curious *Cover*, which, without oppreſſing the Inhabitants of the Earth with any perceivable Weight, confines, reflects, and thereby *increaſes* the vivifying Heat of the Sun. The Air increaſes this kindly Heat, much in the ſame Manner as our Garments by Day, or Bed-clothes by Night, give additional Warmth to our Bodies.—Whereas, when the aerial Veſtment grows thin, or, to ſpeak more philoſophically, when the Air comes leſs in Quantity, and more *attenuated* in Quality, the ſolar Warmth is very ſenſibly diminiſhed. Travelers on the lofty Mountains of *America*, ſometimes experience, to their terrible Coſt, the Truth of this Obſervation. Though the Clime, at the Foot of thoſe prodigious Hills, is even hot and ſultry; yet on their Summits, the Cold rages with ſuch exceſſive Severity, that it is no unuſual Calamity, for the Horſe and his Rider to be frozen to death.—We have therefore great Reaſon to bleſs the Supreme DISPOSER of Things, for placing Us in the *commodious* Concavity, or rather under the *cheriſhing* Wings of an Atmosphere.

bodied Figure rise; bid the Countenance wear the calm Serenity of Thought, or be agitated with the wild Transports of Passion.—Without this Circumstance of *Colour*, we should want all the Entertainments of Vision, and be at a Loss to distinguish one Thing from another. We should hesitate to pronounce, and must take a little Journey to determine, whether yonder Inclosure contains a Piece of Pasturage, or a Plot of arable Land. We should question, and could not very expeditiously resolve, whether the next Person We meet, be a Soldier in his Regimentals, or a Swain in his Holiday Suit? A Bride in her Ornaments, or a Widow in her Weeds. But Colour, like a particular Livery, characterizes the Class, to which every Individual belongs. It is the *Label*, which indicates, upon the first Inspection, its respective Quality. It is the *Ticket*, which guides our Choice, and directs our Hand *.

The

* This, I believe, suggests the true Sense of those noble Similitudes, used by the divine Speaker. *It is turned as Clay to the Seal, and they stand as a Garment: It*, the Earth and all its Productions receive, from the rising Sun, both Colour and Beauty. Just as the soft Clay, and the melting Wax, receive an elegant Impression from the Seal.—*They* (the Morning and the Day-spring, mentioned in a preceding Verse) *stand as a Garment*; they act the Part of a magnificent and universal Clothing; give all visible Objects, their comely Aspect, and graceful Distinctions. *Job xxxviii. 14.*

What Images are here! How bold, and how fine! The Sea had been described as an *Infant* before the ALMIGHTY. Like an Infant, changeable, froward, and impetuous, with thick Darkness for its Swaddling-band. The Light is represented as an *Handmaid*, attending to *dress* the Creation; and executing the CREATOR's Orders, with a Punctuality that never fails, with a *Speed* that cannot be equalled.

The Sun, I said, was *finite*. But it is rather itinerant, than resident. It passes through the Firmament; and, having supplied Us with Light for several Hours, carries Day into the other Hemisphere. What then shall We do, when the Fountain of Light is sealed, or its Communications are withheld?—A Supply is provided. The Stars appear, like thousands of flaming Torches. Chiefly the Moon, at certain Seasons, succeeds to the Office of furnishing Us with the welcome Blessing. But the Moon is a dark Body. How then can it impart, what it does not possess? Providence, infinitely rich in Contrivances, has found out a Method: Than which nothing can be more simple, yet nothing more effectual. The Moon, being at a proper Distance, receives and reflects the Rays of the Sun. Which are so strong in themselves, that they reach, even in their reverberated Direction, as far as our Globe. Yet are rendered, by this Reflection, soft and gentle. Inasmuch, that they afford Us a most commodious and cheering Illumination; such as qualifies the Horrors of Darkness, without any Diminution of its composing Nature, and soporiferous Influence.—Thus the Sun lightens Us, by the Intervention of the Moon, when He is departed many Degrees beyond our Sight.

We have cursorily surveyed the *upper Rooms* of our great Habitation, and taken a Turn along the *Ground-floor*; if We descend into the subterraneous Lodgments, the *Cellars* of the stately Structure, We shall there also find the most exquisite Contrivance, acting in Concert with the most profuse Goodness.—Here are various *Minerals*, of sovereign

Efficacy

Efficacy in Medicine : which rectify the vitiated Blood, and quicken the languid Spirits; which often rekindle the fading Bloom in the Virgin's Complexion, and reinvigorate the enfeebled Arm of Manhood.—Here are Beds fraught with *Metals* of the richest Value. From hence come the golden Treasures, from hence the silver Stores, which are the very Life of Traffic; and circulate through the Body politic, as the vital Fluid through the animal Frame. Which, in the refining Hand of Charity, are Feet to the Lame, and Eyes to the Blind, and make the Widow's Heart sing for Joy.

Here are Mines, which yield a Metal of meaner Aspect, but of a firmer Cohesion, and of superior Usefulness *. A Metal, that constitutes almost all the Implements, with which Art and Industry execute their various Designs. Without the Assistance of *Iron*, Business would be reduced to the lowest Ebb; Commerce would feel her Wings clipped; and every Species of mechanic Skill, either utterly fail, or be miserably baffled. Without the Assistance of Iron, it would be almost impossible to rear the steady Mast, to display the daring Canvas, or drop the faithful Anchor. Destitute of this ever-neededful Commodity, we should have no Plow to furrow the Soil, no Shuttle to traverse the Loom, scarce any Ornament for polite, or any Utensil for ordinary Life.

Here is an inexhausted Fund of *combustible* Materials †, which supply the whole Nation with Fuel.

These

* *Ferrum, licet Metallorum pretio ultimum, Necessitate tamen primum.* PLIN.

† As for the Earth, says Job, out of it cometh Bread: Corn, Vegetables, and whatever is good for Food, spring
Vol. III. C from

These present their Ministrations in the Kitchen; and yielding themselves as Aliment to the Flame, render our Food both palatable and healthy.—These offer their Service at the Forge; and, with their piercing Heat, mollify the most stubborn Bars, till they become pliant to the Stroke of the Hammer.—The *Coals* pour themselves likewise into the Glass-houses. They rage, amidst those astonishing Furnaces, with irresistible but useful Fierceness. They liquify even the obdurate Flint, and make the most rigid Substances far more ductile, than the softest Clay, or the melting Wax: make them obsequious, not only to the lightest Touch, but to the Impressions of our very Breath.

By this Means, we are furnished, and from the coarsest Ingredients, with one of the most curious and valuable Manufactures in the World. A Manufacture, which transmits the Light and Warmth of the Sun into our Houses; yet excludes the Annoyance of the Rains, and the Violence of the Winds. Which gives *new Eyes* to decrepit Age, and vastly *more enlarged Views* to Philosophy and Science. Which leads up the Astronomer's Discernment, even to the *Satellites* of *Saturn*; and carries down the Naturalist's Observation, as far as the Animalcule Race: bringing near what is immensely remote, and making visible what, to our unassisted Sight, would be absolutely imperceptible.

We have also, when both Sun and Moon withdraw their Shining, an Expedient to supply their Place.

from its Surface. While *under it, is turned up as it were Fire*: its lower Parts תחתיה its deeper Strata, yield combustible Materials; which are easily inkindled into Fire, and administer the most substantial Fuel for the Flame.

Job xxviii. 5.

Place. We can create an *artificial* Day in our Rooms, and prolong our Studies, or pursue our Business, under its cheering Influence. With beaming Tapers and ruddy Fires, We *chase* the Darkness, and *mitigate* * the Cold; We cherish Conversation, and cultivate the social Spirit. We render those very Intervals of Time, some of the most delightful Portions of our Life, which otherwise would be a joyless and unimproving Void.

These obscure Caverns are the Birth-place of the most sparkling Gems; of *Onyx-stones*; of *glistering Stones*,

* I can hardly forbear transcribing the grateful and pious Remark, which *Socrates* makes on this Occasion. Demonstrating, from the advantageous and benign Constitution of Things, GOD's indulgent Care for Mankind, He asks; Το δε και το πωρ πορισαι ημιν, επικερρον μεν ψυχης, επικερρον δε σκολης, συνερον δε προς πασαν τεχνην, και παντα οσα ωφελειας ενεκα ανθρωποι κατασκευαζουσι; Ως γαρ συνελογι εειπεν, εδεν αξιολογον ανευ πωρος ανθρωποι των προς βιον χρησιμων κατασκευαζουσι.—To which his Pupil very intelligently replies, Υπερβαλλει και τελο φιλανθρωπια. *Vid. Socrat. Memor. Lib. IV.* A Work, which may be ranked among the *finest* Remains of Antiquity. *Equal*, it is acknowledged, to any of the antient Compositions in Purity of Style, and Dignity of Sentiment. *Superior*, I think, to them all, for the artful, delicate, and happy Manner of conveying Instruction.

I wish, the Author of the preceding Dialogues had been better acquainted with the *Socratic* Method; and I could wish, that young Students for the Ministry would adopt the Skill of this *heathen* Philosopher. Perhaps, no Qualification of human Growth, would more effectually contribute to render them, what St. *Paul* styles *διδασκους*.—It seems to be the most *insinuating* and *successful* Way both to convince and instruct. Nay, it convinces the Opponent out of his own Mouth, and makes the Pupil instruct himself. It is what the TEACHER sent from GOD practised, in those incomparable Sketches of faithful Admonition and masterly Address, The Parable of the *two Debtors*, and of the *good Samaritan*. Luke vii. 41. Luke x. 30.

Stones, and all Manner of precious Stones. Which, when nicely polished, advantageously set, and prodigal of their Lustre, stand Candidates for a Place on the royal Crown, or a Seat on the *virtuous* Fair One's Breast. I will not, with our Men of Gallantry say, they emulate the living Brilliancy of her Eyes; rather they serve as a Foil, to set off the Beauties of her accomplished Mind, and amiable Conversation. *Whose Price*, according to the unerring Estimate of Inspiration, is superior to Sapphires, *is far above Rubies* *.—If these shining Rarities, extracted from the Cabinets of the Earth, are an Ornament to Some, are they not an Incitement to All? All who have read those animating and glorious Words; *They shall be mine, saith the LORD, in the Day when I make up my Jewels* †.

Here are *Quarries*, stocked with Stones, inferior in Beauty to the Jeweler's Ware, but much more eminently beneficial. Which, when properly ranged, and cemented with a tenacious Mortar, form the convenient Abodes of Peace, and build the strongest Fortifications of War: defending Us from the Inclemencies of the Weather, and the more formidable Assaults of our Enemies. These constitute the Arches of the Bridge, which convey the Traveler, with perfect Security, over the deep and rapid Stream; enabling both Man and Horse to pass, with easy Intercourse, from one Bank of the broadest River to another. These give Us the rocky Girdles of our *Quays*, and strengthen the Arms, the stupendous Arms of the *Mole*: which stretch themselves far into the Ocean; curb the Impetuosity of the Surge; and screen the helpless Bark, while
tempestuous

* Prov. xxxi. 10.

† Mal. iii. 17.

tempestuous Waves, like a Savage disappointed of its Prey, foam, and roar, and rage around.

These stony Treasures are comparatively *soft*, while they continue in the Bowels of the Earth; but acquire an increasing *Hardness*, when exposed to the open Air. Was this remarkable Peculiarity reversed, what Difficulties would attend the Labours of the Mason? His Materials could not be extracted from their Bed, nor fashioned for his Purpose, without infinite Toil. Suppose his Work completed, it could not long withstand the Fury of the Elements; but insensibly mouldering, or incessantly decaying, would elude the Expectations of the Owner; perhaps, might prove an immature Grave, instead of a durable Dwelling.

Here are vast *Layers of Clay*. Which however contemptible in its Appearance, is abundantly more advantageous, than the Rocks of Diamond, or the Veins of Gold. This is moulded, with great Expedition and Ease, into Vessels of any Shape, and of almost every Size. Some, so delicately *fine*, that they compose the most elegant and ornamental Furniture, for the Tea-table of a Princess. Others, so remarkably *cheap*, that they are ranged on the Shelves, and minister at the Meals, of the Peasant. All so perfectly *neat*, that no Liquid takes the least Taint, nor the nicest Palate any Disgust, from their cleanly Services.—The CREATOR, who never forgets and never neglects even the meanest of the People, has distributed this most necessary Kind of Earth in the greatest Abundance. It is found in every Country, almost in every Field. It lies near the Surface, and is obtained with little Labour,

and with very little Expence. Thus *hast Thou, O GOD, of thy Goodness, prepared for the Poor.*

A Multiplicity of other Stores, are locked up by Providence, in those ample Vaults. The *Key* of all is committed to the Management of *Industry*; with free Permission to produce each particular Species, as Necessity shall demand, or Prudence direct.

Which shall we most admire, the bountiful Heart, the liberal Hand, or the All-discerning Eye of our Great CREATOR? How observable, how admirable is the *Precaution*, in removing these useful but cumbrous Wares, from the Superficies; and stowing them, in proper Repositories or Lumber-rooms, beneath our Feet!—Were they scattered over the Surface, the Ground would be choaked and *embarrassed* with the enormous Heaps. Our Roads would be blocked up, and scarce any Portion left free for the Operations of Husbandry.—Were they buried extremely deep, or sunk to the Center of the Globe, it would cost Us immense Pains to procure them; or rather, they would be quite *inaccessible*.—Were they uniformly spread into a Pavement for Nature; the Trees could not strike their Roots, nor the Herbs shoot their Blades, but universal *Sterility* must ensue.—Whereas, by their present Disposition, they furnish Us with a Magazine of metallic, without causing any Diminution of our vegetable Treasures. Fossils of every splendid and serviceable Kind enrich the *Bowels*, while Bloom and Verdure embellish the *Face* of the Earth.

So judicious is the Arrangement of this grand Edifice! So beneficent the Destination of its whole

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Furniture *! In which, all is regulated with consummate Skill, and touched into the highest Perfection. All most exactly adapted to the various Intentions of Providence, and the manifold Exigencies of Mankind. Supplying *every Want*, We can feel; and gratifying *every Wish*, We can form.

Infomuch, that the whole System affords a favourite Topic of Praise, even to those distinguished Beings, who *stand on the Sea of Glass*, and have the *Harps of GOD in their Hands*. They lift their Voice and sing, *Great and marvelous are thy Works, O LORD GOD Almighty* †!—And is there not Reason, my *Aspasio* would say, infinite Reason, for *Us* to join this triumphant Choir? Adding Gratitude to our Wonder, and Love to our Hallelujahs? Since all these Things are to *Us*, not merly Objects of Contemplation, but Sources of Accommodation: not only a majestic Spectacle, bright with the Display of our CREATOR's Wisdom, but an inestimable Gift, rich with the Emanations of his Goodness. The Earth hath He *set before* the Inhabitants of Glory, but *the Earth bath he given to*

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* No Notice is taken of the *Ocean*, in this little *Rent-roll* of Nature's Wealth; because a distinct Sketch is given of that grand Receptacle and its principal Services, in *Letter IX*.

† *Rev. xv. 3. Great and marvelous are thy Works, O LORD GOD Almighty! Just and true are thy Ways, Thou KING of Saints!* The first Part seems to mean, what the inspired Writer calls, *The Song of Moses*. The second contains, what he styles, *The Song of the LAMB*. The first, I should imagine, relates to the stupendous Works of Creation. The second alludes to the far more wonderful Scheme of Redemption. The former, describing the System of Nature, is recorded by *Moses*; the latter, comprehending the Salvation of the Saints, is accomplished by *CHRIST*.

the Children of Men *.—Having given Us Ourselves; given Us a World; has He not a Right, a most unquestionable Right, to make that tender Demand? *My Son, give me thy Heart* †.

Shall I add another Passage? Which, viewed with any but the last Paragraph, will be like *the Head of Gold*, eminent and conspicuous on *Feet of Iron and Clay*. It is taken from the finest philosophical Oration, that ever was made. I never read it, but with a Glow of Delight, and with Impressions of Awe. It is, in short, inimitably spirited and sublime.—You think, perhaps, I act an impolitic Part, in being so lavish of my Praise; and that the Quotation must suffer, by such an *aggrandizing* Introduction. But I am under no Apprehensions of this Kind. Forbear to be delighted, if You can; cease to admire, if You can; when You hear OMNISCIENCE itself declaring, That, on Sight of this universal Fabric, emerging out of Nothing, THE MORNING STARS SANG TOGETHER, AND ALL THE SONS OF GOD SHOUTED FOR JOY ‡.—The System was so graceful, so magnificent, and, in all Respects, so exquisitely finished; that the most accomplished Intelligences were charmed, were transported. They knew not how to express themselves on the great Occasion, but in *Shouts* of Exultation, and *Songs* of Praise. Is it possible for Imagination to conceive an Encomium, so just, so high, so beautifully noble!—I am sure, after so much Delicacy, and Majesty of Sentiment, any thing of mine must

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* Psal. cxv. 16.

xxxviii. 7.

† Prov. xxiii. 26.

‡ Job

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be intolerably flat ; unless You will except this one Profession, that I am, with the most cordial Sincerity,

My dear Aspasio,

Inviolably Yours,

THERON.



LETTER VII.

ASPASIO to THERON.

My dear THERON,

IF You write with such a View, and from such a Motive, as are mentioned in your last, expect no more *free-will* Offerings from my Pen. In this one Instance, I shall think it my Duty to be covetous. I shall act the Miser out of Principle ; and hardly persuade myself to part with a single Line, till it is become an undeniable *Debt*. I must turn your own Artifice on Yourself ; and lay You under a Necessity of obliging, entertaining, and edifying me by your Correspondence.

For, give me Leave to assure You, that I am always delighted, and always improved by your Epistles. They shew me a Multitude of Beauties in the Creation, which I should not otherwise have discerned. They point out the infinite Power, the unsearchable Wisdom, and the charmingly rich Goodness of the glorious MAKER. Such a

Philosophy

Philosophy turns all Nature into a *School* of Instruction, and is no contemptible *Handmaid* to true Religion. It makes every Object a Step, better than a golden Step, to raise both our Knowledge and our Affections to the adorable and immortal CAUSE of all. Engaged in such Speculations, We cry out with the Psalmist; O LORD our Governor, how excellent is thy Name in all the Earth *!

There is but one Circumstance wanting, to complete the Pleasure, which I receive from your Observations.—The *Sun*, You took Notice, is the grand Ornament of this magnificent System. That which gives Colour and Form, the comely Aspect and graceful Distinction, to all material Objects.—This the bodily Eye perceives and acknowledges. But to the intellectual and believing Eye, the *Sun of Righteousness* is a much grander, and no less necessary Ornament. This adorns the Universe, and communicates a Glory to every Object; as it manifests, in the clearest brightest Manner, all the Perfections of the GODHEAD. But, to this lower World, it gives a very peculiar Lustre.—A poor Peasant reckons it the highest Honour to his Cottage, that it has once lodged a Prince, or accommodated a Monarch. With infinitely greater Reason may these elementary Abodes glory, that they have accommodated, not for a single Night, but for many Years, the LORD of Heaven. That the KING of Kings was their Tenant even from his Birth in the Stable, to his Death on the Cross.

Yes, *Theron*; it is the greatest Glory of this Air, that it furnished IMMANUEL with Breath.

Yonder Sun may boast, that it shone upon his

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* Psal. viii. 9.

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Foot-steps. That Ground, cumbrous as it is, might even leap for Joy, that it bore so divine a Guest. And all the Elements may clap their Hands, that they had the Privilege of administering to his Nourishment.—As to Us Men, it is our most honourable Distinction, and should be our continual Triumph, that HE lived and died *amongst* Us; yea, lived and died *for* Us. That, having united our Nature to Himself, He has carried it into the Heaven of Heavens. Where it shines, with transcendent Majesty and Beauty, as the eternal Ornament of the Creation of GOD.—Methinks, therefore, this noble and delightful Consideration, should intermingle itself with all our Contemplations, on the Works of Nature. Just as the Beams of the Sun intermingle their Light, with all the Regions of the Firmament; and diffuse their Heat, over all the Face of the Earth.

While I am roving heedlessly along, your Remarks often interpose, like some intelligent faithful Monitor, who claps his Hand upon my Breast, and says; *Stand still, and consider the wondrous Works of GOD* *.—Willingly I obey the Admonition. The *Christian* may, with peculiar Complacency, consider this grand Theatre of Wonders, this copious Magazine of Blessings. Because, conscious of an Interest in *JESUS*, He has a Right to call them all *his own* †. He may look round upon present Things; He may look forward unto future Things; and, trusting in his SAVIOUR's Merit, may confidently say—"Not one only, but *both* these Worlds
" are

* Job xxxvii. 14.

† 1 Cor. iii. 2. *All Things are yours; because Ye are CHRIST's.*

"are mine. By virtue of my REDEEMER's
 "Righteousness, I have a Covenant-right to the
 "necessary Accommodations of this Life; and,
 "on the same unshaken Footing, I stand intitled
 "to the inconceivable Felicity of a better."

Surely then it must be as pleasing an Employ, to
 examine the *Validity* of our *Title* to future Things,
 as to estimate the Value of our present Possessions.
You have executed the one. Let *me* attempt the
 other.—An Attempt, never unseasonable, now par-
 ticularly proper. Since it is expressly required by
 your Pen, and suggested by the very Subject of
 your Epistle. Especially, as I look upon the *justi-*
fying Righteousness, to be no less the peculiar Work-
 manship and Gift of GOD, than the Scenes of
 Creation and the Productions of Nature. And as
 I would fain have every Thing that is beautiful,
 every Thing that is magnificent in this visible Sys-
 tem, serve as a Foil to our REDEEMER's
 Glory; to the Glory of his Person, and the Im-
 portance of that Service, which He has performed
 for Sinners.

You have surveyed material Nature. It appears
 to be a fair and stately Mansion. For the Purposes,
 which it is intended to answer, completely furnished,
 and completely finished. Is not our SAVIOUR's
Obedience, the Provision made for indigent and guilty
 Souls, equally rich and equally perfect?—Since
 this is everlasting and immutable; since the other
 is transient and perishable; doubtless We may ar-
 gue with the judicious Apostle: *If that which is to*
be done away, which will soon be consigned over to
 Dissolution, is glorious; much more, that which re-
 maineth,

maineth, whose blessed Effects continue to eternal Ages, *is glorious* *.

We are, every One, *as an unclean Thing* †. Our very Nature is contaminated. Even Sanctification, though it destroys the reigning, does not wholly supersede the polluting Power of Iniquity. So that whatever Graces We exercise, whatever Duties We perform (like Rays of Light transmitted through coloured Glass, or like generous Wine streaming from a defiled Cask) they receive some improper Tinge, or contract some debasing Taint. But *CHRIST* was entirely free from this *innate* Contagion. He had no corrupt Bias upon his Will, nor any irregular Tendency in his Affections.

Being thus free from original Corruption, *He did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth* †. Not one vain Imagination passed through his Mind, nor breathed the slightest Stain upon his Thoughts. All his Words were irreproachable, and every Action blameless.—The most accomplished among the Children of Men, when surpris'd in some unguarded Moment, or assaulted on some weak Side, have been betrayed into Error, or hurried into Sin. Even *Moses* spake unadvisedly with his Lips; and *Aaron*, the Saint of the LORD, warped to idolatrous Practices. *They* were like some stagnating Lake; in which, the Dregs being subsided, the Waters appear clean; but when stirred by Temptation, or agitated by Affliction, the Sediment rises, and the Pool is discoloured. Whereas, *CHRIST* may be compared to a *Fountain*, that is all Transparency, and pure to the very Bottom: which, however shaken,

* 2 Cor. iii. 11. † Isai. lxiv. 6. † 1 Pet. ii. 22.

shaken, however disturbed, is nothing but fluid Crystal; permanently and unalterably clear.

It was a small Thing for the blessed *JESUS*, to be influenced by no depraved Propensity. He was born in a State of *consummate Rectitude*; and from the first Moment of his existing in Flesh, was adorned with all the Beauties of Holiness. *HOLINESS TO THE LORD* was inscribed, not on the *Mitre*, but on the *Heart*, and interwoven with the very Nature of our great *HIGH-PRIEST*. Therefore He is styled by the Angelic Harbinger of his Birth, *THAT HOLY THING* *.—In the Prophecy of *Zechariah*, the Dignity of our *REDEEMER*'s Person, and the Perfection of his Obedience, are displayed by the Similitude of a *Stone* †, decorated with the most exquisite

* *Luke i. 35.*—Which is spoken, in *Contradistinction* to the State of all other Births; and implies the *universal* Prevalence of original Defilement, this *one* Instance only excepted. For, if other Infants were holy at their first Formation, and made after the Image of *GOD*, this Remark had been trivial and impertinent, if not droll and burlesque; like saying with great Solemnity, “The Child shall have a Mouth and a Head; aye, and Eyes” in the one, and Lips to the other.”—Far be it from Us, to ascribe Superfluity of Speech, or Weakness of Sentiment, to the Angels of Light. No; here was *dignus Vindice Nodus*. An unparalleled and miraculous Event. A clean Thing issuing from an Unclean! A Child perfectly pure and upright; though born of a Woman; sprung from a Daughter of fallen *Adam*!

† *Zech. iii. 9, 10.* For behold the Stone that I have laid before *Joshua*; upon one Stone shall be seven Eyes; behold! I will engrave the Graving thereof, saith the *LORD* of Hosts, and I will remove the Iniquity of that Land in one Day. In that Day, saith the *LORD* of Hosts, shall ye call every Man his Neighbour under the Vine, and under the Fig-tree.

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quisite Engraving. Wrought, not by *Bezaleel* or *Aholiab*, though divinely inspired Artists, but by the Finger of JEHOVAH Himself; and more highly finished, than it is possible for human Skill to equal, or human Thought to conceive.

The whole Tenour of our LORD's Conduct, was a living Exemplification of Piety and Morality, in their most *extensive* Branches, and most *amiable* Forms. Saints of the highest Attainments have fallen short of the Glory of GOD; have been far from reaching the exalted Standard of his Precepts. But *CHRIST* failed in no Point; *CHRIST* came short in no Degree.—We formerly observed the

Behold the Stone; the long-expected MESSIAH; that chief Corner-stone, on which the Church is built, and the Hope of *Israel* founded.—It is *laid before Joshua* the High-Priest and his Fellows; as the only Foundation, on which those wise Master-builders should rest the Faith, and establish the Salvation of Sinners.—*Upon one Stone shall be seven Eyes*; to denote the unerring Discernment and infinite Wisdom of our LORD. Whereby He is capable of planning, presiding over, and conducting all Things, relating to the unsearchable Work of Redemption.—*I will engrave the Graving thereof*. For Him hath GOD the FATHER sealed; distinguished Him by every Characteristic of the MESSIAH; adorned Him with every illustrious Gift; and fitted Him, in all Respects, for the Discharge of his grand Office.—*I will remove*, by his Obedience unto Death, *the Iniquity of the Land*; and that *in one Day*, not by a long Train of Victims, or by a frequent Repetition of the same Sacrifice, but by “his own Oblation once offered.”—In Consequence of this all-sufficient Expiation, Peace and Tranquility shall take Place in the Believer's Soul. Even that Peace, which passeth all Understanding; and is represented, though faintly, by sitting *under the Vine and under the Fig-tree*. Where the happy Owner and his Friends, enjoy an undisturbed Repose, a refreshing Shade, and the most delicious Fruit.

the great Sublimity, and vast Extent of the divine Law. That, before the Tribunal of GOD, nothing will pass for Righteousness, but a complete Conformity to this most perfect Rule. From whence appears the utter Impossibility of our Justification, on Account of any Duties performed by Ourselves. How should We rejoice then to contemplate our vicarious Righteousness! That which is introduced by our condescending SURETY!

JESUS CHRIST, the Surety for Us insolvent Wretches, made Himself subject to this Law. And though, in its Threatenings, the condemning Power of Sin is set in terrible Array; though, in its Commands, the very Perfection of Obedience is most peremptorily insisted on; He asked no Mitigation of its Severity, nor any Abatement of its Demands. "Lo I come, said He, to pay the uttermost Farthing of the Debt, to do every Jot and Tittle of the Duty." That so his Righteousness, arising to View, from the severest Trial, by the exactest Rule, might, like Gold from the Furnace, shine with all possible Lustre.

His Righteousness flowed from those best of Principles, supreme Love to GOD, and unfeigned Affection to Men. Beginning at these two Sources, let Us trace our LORD's Obedience, through some little Part of its illustrious Progress.—If, as We proceed, We are enabled to see that *Just One*, perhaps, We shall no longer be offended or surprised, at the first and great Command of the Gospel. *This is his Commandment*, which has the Precedence to all others, that *We should believe on the Name of his Son JESUS CHRIST* *. Not,

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* 1 John iii. 23.

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that We should *do* any Thing to obtain Life, but that We should *believe* on his beloved SON; and live by what HE, the blessed Substitute for Sinners, has done.

His Delight in GOD was conspicuous, even from his *early* Years. The sacred Solemnities of the Sanctuary, were more engaging to his youthful Mind, than all the Entertainments of a Festival.—When He entered upon his Ministry, *whole* Nights were not too long for his copious Devotions. The lonely Retirements of the Desert, as affording Opportunity for undisturbed Communion with GOD, were more desirable to *CHRIST*, than the Applauses of an admiring World.

So ceaseless and transcendent was his Love to GOD, that He never sought any separate Pleasure of his own; but always did those Things, which were pleasing in his FATHER's Sight. *Wist ye not, that I must be about my FATHER's Business?* was the Rule of his Childhood, and the leading Maxim of his whole Life. In doing this, He took unspeakable Satisfaction: in doing this, He was absolutely indefatigable. *It was his Meat and Drink*, refreshing as the richest Food, delightful as royal Dainties, *to finish the Work that was given Him to do* *.

How wakeful and jealous was his Concern for the divine Honour! I hear the vilest Reproaches cast upon his own Character: I see the most horrid Indignities offered to his own Person. Yet no resentful Emotion reddens in his Cheek; not one angry Syllable starts from his Mouth. But when mercenary Wretches prophane the Temple, and

turn the House of Prayer into a Den of Thieves; then his generous Bosom throbs with Zeal; then He makes his Tongue like a sharp Sword; and having first severely rebuked, afterwards resolutely expels, the sacrilegious Intruders.—Indeed, his Zeal for the House of the LORD and for the Purity of his Ordinances, is represented by the evangelical Historian, as *eating Him up* *. Like a heavenly Flame, glowing in his Breast, it sometimes fired Him with a graceful Indignation; sometimes melted Him into godly Sorrow; always broke forth and exerted itself in a Variety of vigorous Efforts; till it even consumed his vital Spirits.

So active and unremitted was the Obedience of the blessed JESUS, that the Sun did not enter upon his Morning Race with a more constant Assiduity, nor dispatch his daily Circuit with greater Expedition. And sure I am, that radiant Luminary never dispensed Beams, half so bright, or a thousandth Part so beneficial.—Short was his Span, but how grand and extensive were his Services. So *grand*, that they bring more Glory to GOD, than all the Administrations of Providence, and all the Phænomena of Nature. So *extensive*, that they spread, in their gracious Efficacy, to the Ends of the Earth, and to the closing Period of Time. Nay, they will diffuse their blessed Influence even to the celestial World, and have no other Limits of their Duration than the Ages of Eternity.

Who can declare the *Charity* of JESUS CHRIST? It was ardent: it was unintermitted: it was unbounded. Though always serene and serious, He was never sullenly grave. His Conver-

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* John ii. 17.

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sation was Affability itself; and the Law of Kindness dwelt on his Lips. What fretted and chagrined the Disciples, made not the least ruffling Impression on their LORD. The rude and troublesome Behaviour of Some, the weak and impertinent Talk of Others, served only to display the unalterable Mildness of his Temper.

Nothing could imbitter his Spirit. Even the Wicked and Unthankful were Partakers, ample Partakers of his Benevolence. Who ever applied to Him in vain? When did He dismiss any needy Petitioner, without the desired Blessing? What heavy Burden did He not unloose? What afflictive Evil did He not remove? *He even took their Infirmities, and bare their Sickneses* *. In all their Afflictions He was afflicted. His tender sympathizing Heart felt, as it were, the Miseries of Others; and was as ready to succour them, as if the Complaints and Sorrows had been his own.

He not only relieved, when his Aid was implored, but prevented the Expectations of the Distressed. *He went about doing Good* †; seeking the Afflicted, and offering his Assistance. With great Fatigue †, He traveled to remote Cities; with no less

* Matt. viii. 17.

† Acts x. 38.

† JESUS, being weary with his Journey, *made* *ελεος*. John iv. 6.—*ελεος* is thus explained by a Greek Commentator, *απλος, και ως δοξη*. Our LORD sat down, without Ceremony and without Complaint, even on the rough unfurnished Place: contented to use it, just as He found it; neither desiring a softer Seat, nor wishing for any better Accommodation.—I rather think, the Adverb refers to the preceding Adjective *επισημον*, which signifies State of very great Fatigue; weakening a Person to such a Degree, that He can hardly walk with steady

less Condescension, He visited the meanest Villages. That All might have the Honour, and All the Benefit, of his healing Presence and heavenly Instructions.

He gave Sight *, and all the agreeable Scenes of Nature, to the Blind; Health, and all the choice Comforts of Life, to the Diseased. He expelled malevolent raging Dæmons; and restored, what is more precious than the Light of the Body, or the Vigour of Constitution, the calm Possession of the intellectual Faculties.—What greatly surpassed all the preceding Blessings, He delivered the wretched Soul from the Dominion of Darknes, and from the Tyranny of Sin. He made his Followers Partakers of a divine Nature, and prepared them for a State of never-ending Bliss.

Such priceless Treasures of Wisdom and Beneficence flowed from his Tongue, and were poured from his Hands!—How different these Triumphs of Mercy, from the Trophies erected, by wild Ambition, in the bloody Field! If *Heathens* celebrated those mighty Butchers, who made Cities their Slaughter-house, made half the Globe their Sham-

Steps, or even sit in an *upright* Attitude. The sacred Historian seems to mean, that our LORD sat in such a Posture, as bespoke the Lassitude of his Body; declared the Failure of his Spirits; and *shewed* Him to be almost spent, with the Heat of the Day, and the Toil of Traveling. Which Circumstance gives a most beautiful Heightning to his Charity and Zeal, so generously and so successfully exerted in the following Conference.

* *Exemplum* to *St. Matthew*, is the delicate and noble Expression of the Evangelist, *Luke vii. 21. He made them a Present of Sight.* Silver and Gold had He none. But these were his Gifts; such were his Alms. God-like Beneficence indeed!

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bles; and measured their Merit, by the Devastations they spread; how should *Christians* admire this heavenly BENEFACTOR, who rose upon a wretched World, with Healing under his Wings! Who distributed, far and near, the unspeakably rich Gifts of Knowledge and Holiness, of temporal Happiness and eternal Joy!

Nor were these righteous Acts his strange Work, but his *repeated*, his *hourly*, his almost *incessant* Employ. Sometimes, We hear him preaching in the Temple, or publishing his glad Tidings in the Synagogues. Sometimes, We see Him surrounded with listening Crouds, in a private House; or bringing forth the good Things of his Gospel on the Deck of a Ship. At other Times, He takes a Mountain for his Pulpit; the Heavens are his Sounding-board; and *all that have Ears to hear*, are invited to be his Audience.—“He preached Holiness, says an ingenious Writer, to Mens Eyes no less than their Ears.” Yes; his whole Life was a continual Lecture of the sublimest Piety, of the most refined Morality, of Virtue truly divine. And which is to Us the crowning Circumstance, all this was not barely for our *Imitation*, but for our *Justification* also*. To be a lovely and inviting Model for the first;

* The Reader, I hope, will constantly advert to this Remark. Otherwise, He will lose, even in the Evangelists themselves, what is most evangelical. That our LORD's Life was exemplary; was sublimely perfect; and a Pattern for our Imitation; all this is strictly true. But in all this, there is nothing of genuine Gospel. Here are no *Glad-tidings* for an impotent and ruined Creature. Only a consummate Copy for a withered Hand to transcribe.

Whereas, if We believe, that in all this *CHRIST* acted as our Surety and Representative: that by all this,

first; to be a sure and immoveable Ground for the last.

Does He lay aside his solemn Office? It is only to carry on the same generous Design in a more condescending and familiar Manner. If He meets with the *Pharisees*, He discovers their Errors, and reproves their Vices; He confutes their Objections, and (in case they are not absolutely inaccessible to wise Counsel) rectifies their Mistakes. If He vouchsafes to be present at a Feast, He furnishes the richest, incomparably the richest Part of the Treat. *Honey and Milk are under his Tongue* *. He inculcates Lowliness of Mind on the vain †; He recommends disinterested Charity to the Selfish ‡; and promises Pardon to the weeping Penitent §.—Is He retired from other Company, and attended only by his own Family? His Conversation is a Sermon. Whether He sit in the inner Chamber, or travel on the public Road, or walk through the Corn-fields, He is still prosecuting his great Work; training up his Disciples for their sacred Function; and revealing to them those Oracles of Heaven, which they may communicate to remote Nations, and transmit to distant Ages.—Is He retired from all Company?

Even

He wrought a Righteousness, which, in the Judgment and Construction of the Law, is really ours: that GOD imputes this Righteousness to Us, and will deal with Us according to its Desert: when We believe this, We see the Light of the glorious Gospel, and enter into the unfearchable Riches of CHRIST. This gives an additional Beauty, an exquisite and inexpressible Charm to all the Actions and Virtues, all the Trials and Sufferings of our blessed Master. He was holy and righteous, not as a private Person, not for Himself alone, but for Us Sinners, and our Justification. Amen! Hallelujah!

* Cant. iv. 11. † Luke xiv. 8. ‡ Luke xiv. 12.
§ Luke vii. 48.

Even then He does not discontinue his Labours of Love, but adds the fervent Intercessions of the Night, to the charitable Toils of the Day. When all but Himself, lay sunk in soft Repose, this ADVOCATE for a guilty World, was engaged in an Exercise of Benevolence; which, though secret and unobserved as the falling Dews, was far more beneficial to our best Interests, than those pearly Drops to the languishing Herbs.

Unparalleled Benignity! He forgot his daily Food, neglected his necessary Rest, to spend and be spent for the Salvation of Mankind. Neither the Hardships of continual Self-denial, nor the Calumnies of envenomed Tongues, could divert Him from pursuing this favourite Business.—He sought none of your Honours, coveted none of your Rewards, O ye Children of Men! What He sought, what He coveted, was, to wear out his Life in your Service, and lay it down for your Ransom. This was all his Desire, and this indeed He desired earnestly.—He longed (beneficent, blessed BEING!) He longed for the fatal Hour. He severely rebuked one of his Disciples, who would have dissuaded Him from going as a Voluntier to the Cross. He was even *straitened* *, under a Kind of holy Uneasiness.

* Luke xii. 50. The original Word *Comyxomai* seems to express the Condition of a Person, wedged in, on every Side, by a tumultuous Throng of People. His Hands are hampered, and his Body is confined in a moving Prison: He pants for Breath, and is almost stifled in the Crowd.—How must such a One long to be disengaged from these very uneasy Circumstances! With equal Ardour did our most beneficent LORD desire those Sufferings, which were to overwhelm Him with Distress, but exalt U, to Happiness; were to bathe his

ness, till the dreadful Work was accomplished; till He was *baptised with the Baptism of his Sufferings*, bathed in Blood, and plunged in Death.

By this most meritorious Obedience and Death, what did He not *deserve*? What did He not *procure*? He procured those inestimable Blessings, the Pardon of Sin, and Reconciliation with GOD. Procured them (O! Love unmerited and unmeasurable!) for Prodigals, for Traitors, for Rebels. — To this it is owing, that We, who were Enemies against GOD, may call the KING of Heaven our Father; may have free Access to Him in all our Difficulties; and may hope to reign with Him in everlasting Glory.

Was ever Goodness like this Goodness*? Were ever Blessings comparable to these Blessings? or pur-

chased Limbs in Blood, but cleanse our Souls from Sin. — Ο οχλοι, says the same Historian, *κουρεσθαι σε και αποθλιβειν*, Luke viii. 45.

* Codrus, it is true, devoted Himself to Death for the Athenians; and Curtius threw Himself into the yawning Gulf, for the Preservation of the Romans. — But these died, being *mere* Creatures, and *guilty* Creatures: whereas, the dying JESUS was perfectly innocent, and supremely glorious; “was very GOD, of very GOD.” — These died, only a *little before* their Time; they paid a Debt, for which the inevitable Law of Mortality would soon have distrained. But CHRIST died, though He had Life in Himself; He surrendered, what was wholly his own; and what None could have taken from Him, had He not voluntarily resigned it. — These died for their valuable *Friends*, for their affectionate *Relations*, for their native *Country*; but CHRIST died for Slaves, for Enemies, for the Ungodly. — They died an *honourable* Death: but CHRIST submitted to the most *ignominious* Execution; CHRIST expired under the Imputation of *horrid Crimes*; CHRIST bled and died in the Form of an

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chased with such a Price?—Hide, hide your diminished Heads, ye little transitory Donations of Silver and Gold. The Riches of a thousand Mines, bestowed to feed the Hungry and clothe the Naked, are the most contemptible Trifles, if mentioned with the Charity of the *teaching*, the *healing*, the *bleeding* **JESUS**. Kingdoms given away in Alms, if viewed with this infinitely noble Beneficence, would make just the same Figure, as a Spark from the Summer-hearth, under the potent and boundless Blaze of Noon.—This is indeed *Love that passeth Knowledge* *.

Amidst all these Miracles of Magnificence and of Love (any one of which would have intitled Him to universal Admiration, and everlasting Honour) how *humble* was our SAVIOUR! He ascribes nothing to Himself. His FATHER has the Glory of all his marvelous Acts. O Humility—Virtue dear to the most High GOD, and peculiarly

execrable Malefactor.—In all these Instances, as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so is **CHRIST**'s Love greater than their Love; his *Philanthropy* superior to their *Patriotism*.

Eph. iii. 19. This Expression, as also the principal Circumstance of Superiority hinted in the preceding Note, are founded on the *Divinity* of our LORD. And indeed the Expression is scarce justifiable, the Assertion is hardly true, upon any other Supposition. A Creature dying for a Creature, is, though great, yet not *incomprehensible* Goodness. But, when We view the Sufferings of **CHRIST**, and the Blessings of Redemption surrounded with all the Splendor of the DEITY; they dazzle our Understanding, and fill Us with holy Astonishment. They appear to be the Effects of a Love, never to be spoke of but in the Language of Wonder, never to be thought of but with an Extasy of Delight.

cularly amiable in Men—never didst Thou appear in so charming a Dress, or so striking a Light.

At his Birth, not accommodated with an imperial Palace, or a Bed of *State*; but lodged in a Stable, and laid in a Manger.—As He advanced in Years, not attended with a *royal* Equipage, or supplied from a *royal* Revenue; but labouring with his own Hands, and earning his Bread by the Sweat of his Brow.—When He entered upon his ministerial Office, not the least ostentatious *Parade* appeared, in the Performance of all his wonderful Works. His Manner was as modest, as his Power was miraculous. So far, so very far from affecting the Acclamations of the Populace, that He often imposed Silence on those unspeakably indebted Lips, which were eager to overflow with Praise, and would fain have been the Trumpets of his Fame.

Though a Voice from Heaven proclaimed Him, The BELOVED of his Almighty FATHER; He disdained not to own the ignoble Character of the Carpenter's Son *. Though PRINCE of the Kings of the Earth, He condescended to wash the Feet of mean Fishermen, and to be *in this World, as One that serveth* †. Though PROPRIETOR of the Universe, and LORD of all, He was content to be more destitute than the Fowls of the Air, or the Foxes of the Desert ‡: more destitute (astonishing Abasement!) than the most insignificant, and most hated Animals.

Grandeur, We find, is apt to beget Expectations of superior Regard. Consequently, gives a keener Edge to every Affront, and renders the Mind more tenderly sensible of every Disrespect. But our
LORD's

* Matt. xiii. 55. † Luke xxii. 27. ‡ Matt. viii. 20.

LORD's *Meekness* was as great as his Dignity; and that, through a Series of such *unsufferable* Provocations, as were equaled by nothing, but the transcendent Perfections of his Person, and the Sweetness of his forgiving Grace.

When ridiculed and affronted, He calmly bore, and kindly overlooked the Insult.—When contradicted by *petulant* and *presumptuous* Sinners, He endured, with the utmost Serenity of Temper, their unreasonable Cavils, and their obstinate Perverseness.—When his Invitations, his most endearing Invitations, were ungratefully and stubbornly rejected; instead of remitting, He renewed them; and, with still warmer Affection, importuned his Hearers, not to forego *their own* Felicity.—When all the winning Arts of Persuasion were ineffectual, He added his Tears to his slighted Intreaties; and lamented as a Brother, when scornfully repulsed as a Teacher.

When his bloody Sweat tinged the Stones; when his bitter Cries pierced the Clouds, and were enough to awaken the very Rocks into Compassion; his Disciples slept; stupidly and repeatedly slept. Did their divine but slighted MASTER resent the Unkindness? Did he refuse to admit an Excuse for their Disobedience and Neglect? Yea, He made their Excuse; and that the most tender and gracious imaginable; *The Spirit is willing, but the Flesh is weak* *. Admirable, matchless Candour!—When his Enemies had nailed Him to the Cross, as the basest Slave, and most flagitious Malefactor; when they were glutting their Malice, with his Sorrows, his Torments, and his Blood; nay, when they

* Matt. xxvi. 41.

they spared not to insult and revile Him, even in his last expiring Agonies; far, very far from being exasperated, this HERO of Heaven repaid all their Contempt and Barbarity, with the most fervent Supplications in their Behalf. *FATHER, forgive them*, was his Prayer: *for, they know not what they do**, was his Plea. Divine, adorable Compassion!

Nor was his *Resignation* less exemplary than his Meekness. He went out to meet Afflictions, when they came in his FATHER's Name, and commissioned from his FATHER's Hand. He gave, without the least Reluctance, his Back to the Smelters †, and hid not his Face from Shame and Spitting. Though his Soul, his very Soul was penetrated with the keenest Sensations of Anguish; yet, no impatient Thought discomposed his Mind, no murmuring Word forced its Way from his Lips. *FATHER, not my Will, but thine be done* †, was his Language; when the Sorrows of Death compassed Him, and Pains, inexpressibly severer than the Pangs of Dissolution, came upon Him. *When they gaped upon Him with their Mouth, and smote Him upon the Cheek reproachfully. When his Face was foul with spitting, and on his Eye-lids was the Shadow of Death. When GOD delivered Him to the Ungodly, and turned Him over into the Hands of the Wicked. Yea, when*

the

* Luke xxiii. 34.

† The Punishment of the Scourge, was so dreadful a Part of our LORD's Sufferings, that it is once, and again foretold, by the Prophet *Isaiah*. *I gave my Back to the Smelters*, 1. 6. *With his Stripes We are healed*, liii. 5. *Horace*, who knew it perfectly well, and by whose Countrymen it was inflicted, styles it *The horrible Scourge*; *Horribili seelere Flagello*.

† Luke xxii. 42.

the *ALMIGHTY* set Him for the Mark of *L.* Arrows, and brake Him with Breach upon Breach. When the Weapons of his Wrath cleft his very Reins asunder, and poured his Gall upon the Earth *. Amidst all this Distress, though exquisite and inconceivable, He sinned not by the least irregular Perturbation; but bowed his submissive Head, and kissed the divine Rod, and blessed his very Murderers.

A famous Poet has celebrated *The Man of Ross*: another ingenious Pen has celebrated *The Man of Bath*: O! that *We* may admire, extol, and magnify *The MAN* of Nazareth! O! that every Tongue may speak of his Honour, till Heaven and Earth resound with his Praise.—Here, Ye Writers of Genius, here is a Theme worthy of your finest Perceptions, and more than equal to your most enlarged Capacities. Let Imagination spread her boldest Wing; let Description select her brightest Colours; let Eloquence lavish all her Stores; it will be impossible to exceed, while *The MAN* of Nazareth is the Subject of your Songs. In Him dwells all the Fulness of Perfection. In Him, the whole Choir of *active* and *passive* Virtues abound and shine; abound with the richest Variety, and shine with the highest Lustre. Infinitely surpassing that curious Assemblage of costly Gems, which

studded

* These tragical Images are borrowed from the Book of *Job*, who was an eminent Type of a suffering SAVIOUR. Though they are the very Eloquence of Woe, they do not exaggerate, they cannot express, that unknown Anguish; which wrung a bloody Sweat from our divine MASTER's Body, and forced from his Lips that melancholy Exclamation—*My Soul is sorrowful—exceeding sorrowful—sorrowful even unto Death.* See *Job* xvi.

studded the *Aaronic Breast-plate* *; and, as far as earthly Things can represent heavenly, typified the Splendor and Excellency of our REDEEMER's Righteousness.

In all this, He acted and He suffered, as GOD's *righteous Servant*, and as his People's *righteous Surety*.—By all this, He fulfilled every Jot and Tittle of the divine Law; nay, He more than fulfilled, He *magnified* it. He gave it, sublime and extensive as it is, *good Measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over* †.—Shall You or I then say, or so much as suspect, in our Hearts? “*CHRIST*” “has not done enough. All this is not sufficient” “for our Justification, unless We complete it with” “something of our own?”

He defied the most vigilant of his Enemies to convince him of Sin or Defect.—A far more sagacious Adversary than the Scribes and Pharisees, could detect no Blemish, no Error, in our LORD *JESUS*. *The Prince of this World*, that infernal Tyrant, who had deceived and enslaved all the Nations of the Earth, *came and found nothing in Him* †; not the least Corruption in his Nature, nor the least Failure in his Obedience.—Nay; that Accuser of the Brethren, notwithstanding all his Malignity, could not but acknowledge the unspotted Sanctity of our LORD; *I know Thee, who Thou art, the Holy One of GOD*.

He hath done all Things well; was, not barely the Voice of his Disciples, but the general Acclamation of the People. Or, the Words may be rendered,

* *Exod. xxviii. 17, 18, 19, 20.* † *Luke vi. 38.*

† *John xiv. 30.*

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dered, He hath done all Things *finely* and *gracefully* * with every Circumstance, that constitutes the Propriety and Dignity, the Utility and Beauty of Action. Has He not then done enough, to procure the divine Good-will, even for the guiltiest of Mankind?

I have glorified Thee on Earth †, was his own Profession before the most High GOD. I have glorified Thee, in all that I acted, in all that I uttered, in all that I suffered. I have displayed the Beauties of thy Holiness, the Riches of thy Grace, and the Honour of *all* thy Attributes. So that all thy amiable, thy majestic, thy adorable Perfections, are now seen in the clearest Mirror, and in the brightest Light ‡.

GOD

* *Mark vii. 37. Καλώς.* In this Instance, and throughout all the Gospel, it is very observable; that the Praise, which our LORD receives, comes not from the Pen of the Historian, nor from the Mouth of his Friends, but from the Lips of *Strangers* or *Enemies*—from the Officers, sent to apprehend Him—from the Judge, appointed to examine Him—from the Centurion, who presided at his Execution—and from those apostate Spirits, whose Dominion He came to destroy. A Circumstance, which gives incomparable *Weight* to this Testimony, and incomparable *Lustre* to *CHRIST*'s Character. It presents Us likewise with a most delicate Peculiarity, which We must not expect to find in any other biographical Writers.

† John xvii. 4.

‡ Therefore *CHRIST* is called *αναπλάσμα της δόξης*, *Heb. i. 3.* In other Objects, We have only some obscure Footsteps, or dim Traces, of one or two divine Perfections; here We have the *whole Glory* of the GOD-HEAD. Nay, here We have the *very Brightness* of the FATHER's Glory; or, all the uncreated Excellencies beam forth with *adequate*, that is, with ineffable and infinite Splendor.

GOD also, who is the supreme Standard and unerring Judge of Excellency, bore his Testimony to our blessed MEDIATOR. He spoke it once, yea twice, and with a Voice from Heaven.—In the Constitution of the material World, when it came from the CREATOR's Hand, Omniscience itself could discern no Flaw. Neither could Justice itself, upon the strictest Enquiry, discover any Failure in the Obedience of our SURETY. As therefore it was said, concerning the Works of Creation, *They are all very good* *; So was it said, and by the same Almighty MAJESTY, concerning the SAVIOUR of Sinners, *In Him I am well pleased* †.

This, for ought I know, is the capital Sentence in the Book of GOD. As no Truth is of greater or of equal Importance, so none was ever confirmed by Witnesses so unexceptionable, and distinguished with Circumstances so august.—Let Us, for a Moment, examine the Circumstances. They are pertinent to our Subject. They will strike Us with Wonder; and, I hope, fill Us with Comfort.—You, *Theron*, are an Admirer of sublime Sentiments, and grand Scenery. Here You will find both displayed in their utmost Perfection.

Lo! the Heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the SPIRIT of GOD, descending like a Dove, and lighting upon Him. And lo! a Voice from Heaven, saying; This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.—The Word *Lo*, is twice used, in this short Narrative. To engage and fix our Attention, as on a Fact deeply to be regarded, accompanied with Words ever to be remembered.—*The*

Heavens

* Gen. i. 31.

† Matt. iii. 17.

Heavens were opened. Once the great and wide Sea was divided, and the Foundations of the World were discovered. Now the incomparably wider Expanse of the Skies is rent asunder, and the Realms of Glory are disclosed to View.—And are the crystal Gates unfolded? Do the everlasting Doors lift up their Heads? What then, or Whom may We expect to see?

Shall We see Angels and Arch-angels coming down, before *JESUS* of *Nazareth*, to pay Him Homage, and do Him Service? With this Retinue He will, in due Time, appear. But this is far beneath the Dignity of the present Occasion.— Shall We see *Moses* the great Lawgiver, who conversed with *GOD* Face to Face, as a Man converseth with his Friend? Shall We see *Elijah* the venerable Prophet, who entered the Regions of Life and Immortality, without passing through the Vale of Death? These illustrious Saints will, ere long, attend on the holy Mount, and lay all their Honours at the Feet of their *LORD*.—But now, *ONE* infinitely greater than *Moses* and *Elijah*, *ONE* infinitely superior to all the heavenly Hosts, even the divine *SPIRIT* descends, alights, and abides upon *JESUS*. To dignify, beyond Compare, his Person; and give inestimable Merit to all his Actions.

This, though great and marvelous, is not the Whole of the magnificent Attestation. A Voice, not from the utmost Parts of the Earth, but a Voice from the Heaven of Heavens is heard. That Voice, which spoke on *Sinai*, and the Mountains trembled; that Voice, which spoke at the Beginning, and the World was made; that Voice speaks at our

SAVIOUR's Baptism.—And what is the Purpose of the Speech? We have Reason to listen most attentively. Our All depends upon the Verdict. If any Iniquity, or any Miscarriage, be chargeable on this our Surety, We are undone irrecoverably. That Voice, after a general Survey of Mankind, once declared; *There is None righteous, no, not One.* But, to our inexpressible Consolation it proclaims concerning *JESUS CHRIST, THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED.*

HE, who dwells in Light inaccessible, declares concerning *CHRIST*; This is, not my Creature, but *My Son*. Possessed of the same divine Nature, and of all my incommunicable Attributes.—He is my *beloved Son*. Who lay in my Bosom from Eternity, and is the one adequate Object of my infinite Affection. The highest Angels are too low; fallen Man is too mean; and *JESUS* alone is my Beloved.—In Him *I am pleased*; in Him I am *well pleased*. He is the Center of my Approbation. On Him all my Complacency rests. And all other Beings find Favour in my Sight, only as they are interested in Him, or stand related to Him.

After hearing this *Voice from the excellent Glory*, can there be any Cause to wonder, can We have any Ground to complain, that there is no other Recommendation to the supreme MAJESTY, than the Person and Righteousness of *CHRIST*. No Words, no Works, no Characters, but those which have been stamped with the Broad-seal of Heaven, as truly divine; and are the one grand Object of GOD's everlasting Good-will and ineffable Delight?

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You took Notice, and very justly, how much the Productions of Nature *exceed* and *eclipse* the Attempts of Art. We are pleased with the correct and graceful Performances of the Painter. But do they equal the native Blush of the Rose, or the artless Glow of a Pea-blossom? We are charmed with a fine Piece of Sculpture or Enameling. But is either of them fit to be compared with the natural Polish, of a thousand Shells which are formed in the Ocean, or of a thousand Seeds which spring from the Earth? We admire the Virtues of the antient Saints; Men “that were honoured in “their Generation, and the Glory of their “Times*.” We admire the Meekness of *Moses*, and the Magnanimity of *Elijah*; the exalted Piety of *Isaiah*, and the enlarged Wisdom of *Daniel*; the active Spirit of *Joshua*, and the passive Graces of *Jeremiah*. But what Proportion, put them all together—what Proportion do they all bear to HIS Obedience, *who is gone into Heaven, Angels and Authorities and Powers being made subject unto Him* †? Who is called the HOLY ONE and the JUST ‡; not only by way of Emphasis, but by way of *Exclusion*. Because, no Person is worthy of the Character, no Duties deserve to be mentioned, when *CHRIST* and *his* Righteousness—*his* only perfect Righteousness—are under Consideration.

If We talk of Merit, what *Merit* must there be in such immaculate Sanctity of Soul, and such exemplary Integrity of Conduct; such fervent Zeal for GOD, and such compassionate Good-will to Man; such consummate Worthiness, and extensive Usefulness? Such as were utterly unknown before;

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have

* Ecclus. xlv. 7. † 1 Pet. iii. 22. ‡ Acts iii. 14.

have been absolutely unequalled since; and never will, nor can be paralleled, throughout all Ages!—O my *Theron*! What is the *Drop* of a Bucket to the unfathomable Waves of the Ocean? What is a *Grain* of Sand to the unmeasurable Dimensions of the Universe? What is an Hour or a *Moment* to the endless Revolutions of Eternity? Such are all human Endowments, and all human Attainments, compared with HIS Righteousness, who is *fairer than the Children of Men* *; *the chiefest among ten thousand* †; and who received not the SPIRIT by Measure ‡.

And is this Righteousness designed for *Us*? Is this to be our Wedding-dress, this our beautiful Array, when We enter the Regions of Eternity? Unspeakable Privilege!—Is this what GOD has provided to supply, more than supply our Loss in *Adam*! Boundless Benignity!—Shall *We* be treated by the Judge of the World, as if We had performed all this unfinning and perfect Obedience? Well might the Prophet cry out, like One lost in Astonishment, *How great is his Goodness*!—How great indeed! Since all that the LORD JESUS did and suffered, was done and suffered, for Us Men and our Salvation. *Is imputed unto Us for Righteousness* || and is the Cause, the sole but infinitely sufficient Cause, of our Justification.

Is not your Heart enamoured, my dear *Theron*, with a View of this incomprehensibly rich Grace? What so excellent, what so comfortable, what so desirable

* Psal. xlv. 2. † Cantic. v. 10. ‡ John iii. 34.

|| The Words in the *Italic Character*, are a Testimony from the celebrated Mr. HOOKER. *Ecclesi. Pol. B. V.*

desirable, as this Gift of a SAVIOUR's Righteousness? Though delineated by this *feeble* Pen, methinks, it has Dignity and Glory enough, to captivate our Hearts and fire our Affections: fire them with ardent and inextinguishable Desires after a personal Interest and Propriety in it.—O! may the Eternal SPIRIT reveal our REDEEMER's Righteousness, in all its heavenly Beauty and divine Lustre! Then, I am persuaded, We shall esteem it above *every Thing*; We shall regard it as the *One Thing* needful; We shall count *all Things* in comparison of it, worthless as the Chaff, and empty as the Wind.

To a fallen and immortal Soul, every Thing else is empty as the Wind. But here Sinners may *suck, and be satisfied with this Breast of Consolation*: yea, Millions and Thousands of Millions may *milk out, and be delighted with the Abundance of its Glory* *.—Here we shall find the Doctrine of *Supererogation*, no longer a Chimera, but a delightful Reality. Here indeed is an immense Surplusage, an inexhaustible Fund of Merit †, sufficient to enrich a whole

* *Isai. lxvi. 11.* This Comparison, I think, is peculiarly apposite and significant. The Breasts are prepared for the Infant, before He sees the Light. The delicious Nourishment which they afford, is not, in any Degree, of his own providing. He has no other Agency in the Case, than to imbibe the Liquor, and enjoy the Refreshment. Thus it is with regard to Sinners, and that Righteousness of their SAVIOUR, which procures their Pardon and Acceptance; from whence proceeds their Sanctification, and every spiritual Blessing.

† Yet here is no *rich Fund* (as a learned Writer asserts) no Fund at all, *for the Pope's Treasury of meritorious supererogating Actions*; unless CHRIST and the Pope are to

whole World of indigent and miserable Creatures, Sufficient to make their Cup run over with a superabundant Fulness of Peace and Joy, so long as Time shall last, and when Time shall be no more. For, to use the Apostle's weighty Argument, *If by one Man's Offence, Death reigned by one; much more they which receive Abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of Righteousness, shall reign in Life by one, JESUS CHRIST**. Is it reasonable, that We should ascribe more Power to *Adam*, a mere Man, in making Us Sinners; than to *CHRIST*, the GOD-Man, in making Us righteous? No verily. If *one* Offence, committed by one Man, made all his Posterity chargeable with Guilt, and liable to Death, MUCH MORE shall the manifold Instances of our Divine REDEEMER's Obedience, absolve all his People from Condemnation and Punishment, and intitle them to the Honours and Joys of Immortality.

Think not, that what I have written, is the Language of Rant. It is a Paraphrase, though, I must confess, but a scanty Paraphrase, on *David's* Practice and *David's* Faith. *My Mouth shall shew forth thy Righteousness and thy Salvation all the Day †, for I know*

be placed upon the same Footing; unless the ineffably excellent Actions of JEHOVAH our Righteousness, and the miserably defective Duties of a Man like Ourselves, are to be deemed equally valuable.—Since this will hardly be admitted by Protestants; I believe, *Aspasio* may safely call the Obedience of CHRIST, *The true Supererogation*; as Mr. Ambrose has called the Blood of CHRIST, *The true Purgatory*.

* Rom. v. 17.

† *Psal. lxxi. 15.* I cannot but observe, that *Righteousness* and *Salvation* are frequently connected, by the Author

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know not the Numbers thereof. The super-eminent Righteousness of *CHRIST*, and the great Salvation obtained thereby, He declares, shall be the chosen, the principal Subject of his Discourse. Not on a Sabbath only, but on *every Day* of the Week,

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of

Author of the *Psalms*, and by the Prophet *Isaiab*. In order to intimate, that the one is founded on the other; the latter derives its Origin from the former; there can be no Salvation without a Righteousness, a real, proper, *Law-fulfilling* Righteousness.—At the same Time, I am sensible, that the Word Righteousness *may* signify GOD's Goodness in making, and Faithfulness in performing, his Promises unto *David*. Salvation *may* likewise denote the Delivery of that afflicted Hero from all his Persecutors, and his Establishment on the Throne of *Israel*.

But if We should confine the Sense within these narrow Limits, how *comfortless* the Favour even to *David* Himself, considered as an immortal Being! How much more *insignificant* to Us and others, on whom the Ends of the World are come! Therefore, how *unworthy* of that infinite GOD, who is the Father of the Spirits of all Flesh; who sees, at one View, whatever is, or has been, or shall exist; who, when He speaks, speaks to all his Children, in every Period of Time, and in every Nation under Heaven. (See Verse 18.) As much as a Tutor, when delivering his Lectures, addresses Himself to all his Pupils, whether they sit at his Right-hand or his left, before Him or on every Side.

Whereas, if Righteousness signifies the meritorious Obedience of *CHRIST*, and Salvation implies the Benefits of his Redemption, the Sense is no longer shriveled, impoverished, and mean; but *rich, august, and magnificent*. It pours Consolation among all People, Kindreds, and Tongues. It is worthy of that GOD, who seeth the Things, and regardeth the Persons, which are not as though they were. It comports exactly with that Revelation, in which *CHRIST* is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Beginning and the End, the Sum total.

This Note is already too long; otherwise I should gratify my Inclination, and give a Sanction to my Sentiment, by transcribing *Vitringa's* Exposition of *Isai*. xlv. 8.

of the Year, of his Life. Not barely at the stated Returns of solemn Devotion, but on every common Occasion; in every social Interview, *all the Day long*.—Why will He thus dwell, perpetually and invariably dwell, on this darling Theme? Because, *He knew not the Numbers thereof*. It is impossible to measure the Value, or exhaust the Fullness of these Blessings. The Righteousness is unspeakable, the Salvation is everlasting. To compute the Duration of the One, Numbers fail; to describe the Excellency of the other, Words are at a Loss.

This will appear in a clearer Light, if, to the Perfection of his Obedience, We add the *Majesty* of our SAVIOUR's *Person*. A proper Subject, for some future Letter.—In the mean Time, let me desire my Friend, the Friend of my Bosom, to contemplate our *LORD JESUS* under that lovely and august Character, *GLORIOUS IN HOLINESS* *. And for my Part, I will not cease to pray, that a Sense of this supereminently grand and precious Righteousness may be written on my *Theron's* Heart.—On those living Tables, may it be like Figures cut on a Rock of solid Marble, or inscribed on the Bark of a growing Tree; be *lasting* in its Duration as the former, and *spreading* in its Influence as the latter.—It will then be a sure Proof, that his Name is written in the Book of Life; and it shall then be a most pleasing Pattern for

the Affection,

the Gratitude,

and the Friendship, of

his ASPASIO.

P.S.

* Exod. xv. 13.

P. S. You give a most astonishing Account of the *Pressure* of the Atmosphere. Astonishing indeed! That we should be continually surrounded, continually overwhelmed, with such a Load of Air; quite dreadful to think upon! Yet not be crushed to death, no, nor be sensible of the least Weight.—This, I think, may serve to represent the State of a Sinner, *un-awakened* from carnal Security. Loads, more than *mountainous* Loads of Guilt, are upon his Soul, and He perceives not the Burden. For this Reason, He is under no Apprehensions of the Vengeance and fiery Indignation, which He deserves; He has no superlative Esteem for the Atonement and Merits of the REDEEMER, which alone can deliver Him from the Wrath to come. But, if once his Conscience *feels*, what his Lips, perhaps, have often repeated; “ We do earnestly repent Us “ of these our Misdoings; the Remembrance “ of them is grievous unto us, the Burden of “ them is intolerable;” then how will He prize such a Text: *The LORD laid on CHRIST the Iniquity of Us all!* How will He long for an Interest in the LAMB of GOD, *which taketh away the Sin of the World!* Then, that JESUS who has *finished the Transgression, and brought in everlasting Righteousness*, will be all his Salvation, and all his Desire.



LETTER VIII.

ASPASIO to THERON.

Dear THERON,

I HAVE just been reading that exquisitely fine Piece of sacred History, *The Life of Joseph*. A History—illuminated with a Variety of surprising Incidents, and unexpected Revolutions—ennobled with the most heroic Instances of triumphant Virtue, both amidst the Allurements of Temptation, and under the Pressures of Affliction—animated with such tender and pathetic, such melting and alarming Touches of natural Eloquence, as every Reader must *feel*, and every true Critic will *admire*.

When I came to that remarkable Injunction, with which the generous Viceroy dismissed his Brethren, *Ye shall tell my Father of all my Glory in Egypt* * — I paused — I pondered — I was struck. Certainly, this was enjoined, not by way of Ostentation; but on Account of the Pleasure, which, He knew, it would yield the good old Patriarch.— Was it some kind prompting Angel, or the Voice of Gratitude and Devotion, that whispered in my Ear? “Should not the Children of Men likewise “tell one another of *all the Glory* †, which their

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* Gen. xlv. 13.

† *To see the Glory of CHRIST*, is the grand Blessing, which our LORD solicits and demands for his Disciples,

“REDEEMER possesses in Heaven, and on Earth? Will not this afford them the sublimest Pleasure Here, and be a Source of the most refined Satisfaction for ever and ever?”

Though I had almost determined to write no more, till You could make a Demand, upon the Foot of *Value received*; willingly I recede from my intended Resolution, and obey this pleasing Hint.—But *who can declare the noble Acts of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, or shew forth all his Praise?*—However, if I may but *lisp out* his adorable Name, and present my Friend with a *Glimpse*, or a *broken View* of his divine Perfections, even this will be desirable and delightful. Far more desirable and delightful, than to behold *Rome* in its Magnificence, *St. Paul* in the Pulpit, or *King Solomon* on his Throne*.

Let

principles, in his last solemn Intercession, *John xvii. 24.* It is that, which will complete the Blessedness of Heaven; and fill its Inhabitants with Joy unspeakable and glorious. Surely, then, We should endeavour to *anticipate*, in some Degree, that celestial Bliss; and *habituate* our Souls to this sacred Exercise, which will be our Business and our Reward to endless Ages.

Should the Reader desire Assistance in this important Work, I would refer Him to a little Treatise of Dr. Owen's, intitled, *Meditations on the Glory of CHRIST*:—'Tis little in Size, not so in Value. Was I to speak of it, in the classical Style, I should call it, *aureus, gemmeus, mellitus*. But I would rather say, it is richly replenished with that *Unction from the HOLY ONE*, which tends to enlighten the Eyes, and cheer the Heart; which sweetens the Enjoyments of Life, softens the Horrors of Death, and prepares for the Fruitions of Eternity.

* These, if I remember right, are the three Things, which *St. Augustine* declared, would, beyond all others, most eminently gratify his *Curiosity*.

Let me take the *Lark* for my Pattern; which, as I was lately returning from an Evening Ramble, attracted my Observation.—Warbling her CREATOR's Praise, she mounted in the serene Sky. Still she warbled, and still she mounted, as though she meant to carry her Tribute of Harmony unto the very Gates of Heaven. Having reached, at last, her highest Elevation, and perceiving herself at an immense Distance from the starry Regions, she dropped on a sudden to the Earth; and discontinued, at once, both to sing, and to soar. Now the Morning appears, and is awakening the World, our little Songster retunes her Throat, and re-exerts her Wings.—As I have endeavoured, very imperfectly endeavoured, to strike out a *shadowy* Draught of our LORD's complete Obedience; I would, though absolutely unequal to the Task, once more resume my Pen, and attempt—what would I attempt?—nothing like a Display, but only a faint *Sketch* of his personal Dignity. Such as may just serve to demonstrate, that the Man of *Nazareth* is the GOD of Heaven.

First let me observe, that for some Time past, We have been visited with the most uncomfortable Weather; *dewless Nights*, and *sultry Days*. The Firmament was more like a glowing Furnace, than the Region of refreshing Rain.—The Earth lay parched with Thirst, and chapped with Heat. The Meadows were drained of their Humidity, and all the Flowers hung their fading Heads.—The Streams, which used to flow parallel with the verdant Margin, abandoned their Banks. Diminished and discoloured, they sunk to the very Bottom of their oozy

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Channels.—Nature in general seemed to be resigning the “Robe of Beauty, for the Garment of Heaviness.” Drought was in all our Borders; and *Famine*, We feared, was not far behind.—Clouds of Dust, obscured the Air; tarnished the Hedges; and almost smothered the Traveler. But not one Cloud of *fleecy White* appeared, to variegate the blue Expanse, or give Us Hopes of a reviving Shower*.

It reminded me of that awful Threatening, denounced by *Moses* on a wicked People; *The Heaven, that is over thy Head, shall be Brass; and the Earth, that is under Thee, shall be Iron* †.—It made me apprehensive of that terrible State, which the Prophet so emphatically describes; *The Field is wasted, and the Land mourneth. The Seed is rotten under the Clods, and the Harvest perisheth. The Garners are laid desolate, and the Barns are broken down.—The new Wine is dried up; the Oil languisheth; and all the Trees of the Field are withered.—How do the Beasts groan! The Herds of Cattle are perplexed. Yea, the Flocks of Sheep are made desolate. Because the Rivers of Waters are dried up, and the Fire hath devoured the Pastures of the Wilderness* ‡.—But, blessed be the Divine PROVIDENCE, our Fears are vanished, and a most joyful Change has taken place. The LORD hath

* At such a Juncture, how pertinent is the Question proposed by the Almighty MAJESTY? *Job xxxviii. 37, 38. Who can number, muster or arrange, the Clouds in Wisdom?* So as to have them ready at Hand, on any Emergency. *And who can empty those Bottles of Heaven, in copious but seasonable Effusions upon the Earth? When, as in the Case described above, the Dust of the Roads is attenuated into Powder* בצקת למוצק *and the Clods of the Valley are glued fast together* ידבקו.

† Deut. xxviii. 23,

‡ Joel i. 10, &c.

hath sent a gracious Rain upon his Inheritance, and refreshed it, when it was weary *.

Yesterday in the Afternoon, the Wind shifting to the South, roused the dormant Clouds, and brought some of those agreeable Strangers on its Wings.— At first, they came sailing in small, and thin, and scattered Parties. Anon, the flying Squadrons advanced in larger Detachments, more closely wedged, and more deeply laden. Till at last, the great Rendezvous completed, they formed into a Body of such Depth, and extended their Wings with such a Sweep, as darkened the Sun, and overspread the whole Hemisphere.

Just at the Close of Day, the Gales which escorted the spongy Treasures, retired; and resigned their Charge

3 Psal. lxxviii. 9. The Original is remarkably bold, beautiful, and expressive. It expresses not only the Thing done, but the Manner of doing it; not barely the Act of sending Rain, but that very peculiar Manner, in which the Blessing is sent. So that the Reader is both informed of the Event, and has it exhibited, as it were, in a Picture before his Eyes.

The Word signifies to *distil*, as the Honey-comb drops its delicious Juices. It signifies also to *move to and fro*, from one Side to another, as the Priest moved the Wave-offering towards the four Corners of Heaven.—*תניף* Thou shakest out, or causest to distil: denoting the gentle and gradual Fall. Thou *awailest*, or *dispersest abroad*: denoting the wide, the universal Distribution, of this most valuable Gift.—*גשם נדבות* Rain of Liberalities. Which implies the most copious Effusion, and the most extensive Benefits. The Effusion so copious, that there is enough to supply every Spot; to saturate every Soil; and sink to the very Roots of every Vegetable. The Benefits so extensive, that they gladden every Animal; they cherish every Plant; they fertilize and exhilarate all Nature.—They are therefore, what no Language so happily expresses as the Hebrew, *Rain of Liberalities*.

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Charge to the Disposal of a profound *Calm*. Not a Breeze shook the most tremulous Leaf. Not a Curl ruffled the smooth expansive Lake. All Things were still, as in *attentive Expectation*. The russet Heath, and the slippery Lawn, seemed to gasp after the hovering Moisture. Nature, with all her suppliant Tribes, in expressive pleading Silence, solicited the falling Fruitfulness. Nor pleaded long, nor solicited in vain.

The *Showers*, gentle, soft, and balmy, descend. The Vessels of Heaven unload their precious Freight, and enrich the impoverished Glebe. The liquid Sweetness, which is incomparably more beneficial than trickling Silver, distils. Through all the Night, it distils; and cools the torrid Air; and revives the languishing Earth; and cherishes every living Thing.

Now the Sun, *mild and refulgent*, issues through the Portals of the East. Pleased, as it were, to have emerged from the late Abyss of Darkness, He looks abroad with peculiar Gaiety, and the most engaging Splendors. He looks through the disburdened Air, and finds a gladdened World, that wants nothing but his *all-cheering* Beams, to render its Satisfaction complete.

The Glory comes!—Hail to thy rising Ray,

Great Lamp of Light, and second Source of Day!

Who robe the World, each nipping Gale remove,

Treat every Sense, and beam creating Love.*

At

* These beautiful Lines are borrowed from the SEAPIECE, Canto IV. A narratory, philosophical, and descriptive Poem, written by my ingenious Friend, Dr. Kirkpatrick.

At his auspicious Approach, the freshened Mountains lift their Heads, and smile. The Garden opens its aromatic Stores; and breathes, as from a fuming Altar, Balm to the Smell, and Incense to the Skies. The little Hills, crowned with springing Plenty, *clap their Hands* on every Side. The moistened Plains, and irriguous Valleys, *laugh and sing*. While their Waters, lately exhausted, again *are made deep*, and their *Rivers run like Oil* *.

The whole Earth, *saturated* with the Bounty of Heaven, and *flushed* with humid Life, wears a thousand Marks of Gratitude and Complacency. Washed by the copious Rain, how bright and vivid is the universal Verdure! The *green Carpet* below, may almost vie with the *blue Canopy* above †.—The Forest, and every Tree, burnish their Colours, and array themselves in their finest Apparel. Which as on a Day of general Festivity, is delicately decked with Gems.—From every Pasture, and from all the Grove, the Voice of *Pleasure* and of *Melody* resounds. While the officious Zephyrs waft the floating Harmony, blended with native Perfumes; gently waft them to the Senses, and touch the very Soul with Transport.

Could there be a more brilliant Appearance, or more exuberant Demonstrations of Joy, even to celebrate the Anniversary of *Nature's Birth*? With what admirable Propriety has the *Psalmist* compared yonder orient Sun, in all his sparkling Grandeur, to a young exulting *Bridegroom* ‡; who comes forth, with every heightened Ornament from his Chamber,

* Ezek. xxxii. 14.

† Ταπεινὸν διαμαρτυρεῖ καλλὸς ἡ γῆ, ὡς, μὴ δυνάμει, ἀμύλλασθαι οὐκ ἔστιν. Chrysost, in Gen.

‡ Psal. xix. 5.

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ber, to shew Himself in the most distinguished Period of his Life, and to receive the Blessing which consummates his Happiness!

This most charming and equally majestic Scene, recalls to my Memory that fine Description of the MESSIAH, extant in the last lovely Strains of the *Israelitish Swan**—*HE shall be welcome and salutary as the Light of the Morning; when the Sun ariseth, to chase the malignant Shades, and pour Day through the reviving World. He shall be as the Light of a Morning, that is most serenely fair; without either Storms to disturb, or Clouds to obscure the glorious, the delightful Dawn. Yea, his Appearance shall be more beautiful, and his Influences more beneficial †, than the clear Shining of that*

* *Israelitish Swan*—That is, *David*, so called by *Aspasio*, in Allusion to those well-known Lines of the Poet,

Multa Dircaum laevat Aura Cygnum.

And not without a Reference to the popular Notion, that the Swan sings the most melodious Notes in its last Moments. *Fuit hæc facundi Senis quasi cygnea Vox.* TULLY.

† *More beautiful, more beneficial, than the clear Shining.* Sam. xxiii. 4.—Thus We have ventured to translate, or rather to paraphrase, the Words מְנוּחָה. That the Prefix D often occurs in the comparative Acceptation, and conveys the Idea of *Pre-eminence*, is plain from *Psal. xix.* 10. Where our inspired Author, quite ravished with the Love of the sacred Oracles, declares; *They are desirable beyond Gold, even beyond much fine Gold; they are sweet beyond Honey, and the Droppings of the Honeycomb.*—That the Adjective, which should express this *Pre-eminence*, is sometimes omitted, and to be supplied from the Context, is equally plain from *Isai. x. 10.* Where the *Assyrian Monarch*, boasting of his Conquests, says; *As my Hand hath subdued the Kingdoms of the Idols, even those whose graven Images מְנוּחָה מִיְרוּשָׁלַם were more reputable and excellent than those of Jerusalem.*

grand Luminary, *after a Night of settled Gloom, and Showers of incessant Rain.* When his Beams shed animating Warmth, and vital Lustre, *on the tender Grass* impearled with Dews, and on all the green Treasures of the teeming Earth.

As we have already contemplated the blessed JESUS, under the amiable Character of the JUST ONE; the foregoing Passage of Scripture exhibits Him to our Faith, in the more majestic Quality of THE LORD OF GLORY.—Or rather, unites the two grand Peculiarities, which render Him *unparalleled* in his personal, and *all-sufficient* in his mediatorial Capacity.

Great, unspeakably great and glorious would our SAVIOUR appear; if We had no other Manifestations of his Excellency, than those which preceded his mysterious Incarnation.—In the antient Scriptures, He stands characterized, as the supreme Object of GOD's ineffable Complacency; vested with a Glory, prior to the Birth of Time, or the Existence of Things; even the Glory, *which He had with the FATHER, before the World was* *—He

If this Sense is admitted, We have a fine Comparison, and a grand Advance upon it. Displaying, with the utmost Strength of Sentiment and Imagery—at the same Time, acknowledging the *Insufficiency* of the strongest Sentiments and brightest Image, adequately to display the Glory of CHRIST's Kingdom, the Benignity of his Administration, and the Blessings of his Grace. Should the Translation appear too free and daring, and not approve itself to the exact Critic; the Sense, however, is unquestionably just: agreeable to the whole Tenour of Scripture; and can want no Recommendation to the intelligent Christian.

* John xvii. 5.

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is every where represented, as the ultimate Desire, and the only Hope, of all the Ends of the Earth; the Seed, of inestimable and universal Importance, in whom all Nations should be blessed.—In those royal, or rather divine *Acts and Monuments*, He is recognized, as The RULER of GOD's People: Whose Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, and his Kingdom from Generation to Generation.—How august, how venerable, is this SOVEREIGN! Since it was the highest Honour of the most eminent Saints, and renowned Monarchs *, to act as his *Harbingers*. The Splendor of the Temple, the Richness of its Ornaments, and the Solemnity of its Services, were the Ensigns of his Grandeur; were his sacred *Regalia*, intended to usher Him into the World with becoming State.

Sacrifices, instituted and used, almost from the Foundation of the World, give Us very exalted Apprehensions of *CHRIST*: who is the bright, the polar Star, to which all those Needles invariably pointed. Should We see Galleries built, Avenues opened, Passages hung with Scarlet and Embroidery, in order to introduce some great Personage to the Observation of the Public. If these Preparations had been made, with incessant Assiduity, for four

F 2 Months

* *Moses*, for Instance, and *Joshua*, *David* and *Solomon*, were Types, strongly marked Types, of our great LAWGIVER and DELIVERER, of our Divine RULER and PREACHER. But None prefigured the blessed *JESUS* more eminently than *Melchisedek*. His Name signifies *Righteousness*, and his City signifies *Peace*. In both which Respects, He typified that blessed and only Potentate; who is the LORD our Righteousness, and who hath made our Peace by the Blood of his Cross.

Months only, how high an Idea should We form, concerning the expected Stranger! What then must We think of that MESSIAH; the Dignity of his Person, and the Greatness of his Work? For whose Coming Preparation was made, by a grand Train of Sacrifices and costly Rites, through the long, long Space of *four thousand Years*? On whom the Attention of Mankind was fixed, ever since the Fall of *Adam*; and for whom was all the Expectation of the People of GOD, in every Age of the World.—Should We not think Him worthy to be (what the *Jews* reckoned their Temple and Sacrifices) *the Excellency of our Strength; the Joy of our Glory; and the Desire of our Eyes* *?

Every inspired Prophet was his *Herald*; deputed to blazon his Perfections, or foretel his Coming; to give Us a Pourtrait of his Person, a Display of his Offices, or a Detail of his Benefits. Let Us hear one, speaking the Sentiments of all.—GOD the SAVIOUR came from *Teman*, and the HOLY ONE from *Mount Paran*. His Glory covered the *Heavens*, and the *Earth* was full of his Praise †. Thunders

* Ezek. xxiv. 21, 25.

† See *Habak. iii.* The greatest Part of which sublime Ode, refers to the wonderful Works, recorded by *Moses* and *Joshua*. It seems, especially in the Exordium, to be an Imitation of that majestic Description, with which the *Jewish* Legislator introduces his last solemn Benediction, *Deut. xxxiii.*—These Works are by *Aspasio* ascribed to CHRIST. And, I think, it is demonstrably certain, that JESUS CHRIST is the JEHOVAH celebrated in the Books of *Moses*, and in the Writings of the Prophets. It is CHRIST, who dwelt in the burning Bush, and walked in the burning fiery Furnace. It is CHRIST, who wrought the Miracles in *Egypt*, and the Wonders in the Field of *Zaan*. The temporal De-

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26, 27.—
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* *Exod.*
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Thunders sounded his Trumpet, and the Lightnings waved his Banners. *Before Him went the Pestilence*, for the Destruction of his Enemies; but for the Deliverance of *Israel*, He rode upon his Horses and Chariots of Salvation. The Mountains saw Him, and they trembled; the everlasting Hills, and they bowed their Heads. The Abyss uttered her Voice, and acknowledged his Sovereignty through her deepest Caverns; the towering Surges * lifted up their Hands,

F 3

and

liverer, and the eternal REDEEMER of *Israel*, are one and the same.—He is that *Captain of the Hosts of the LORD*, who gave the Nations as Dust to their Sword, and as driven Stubble to their Bow, *Josh. v. 14*.—He is that *mighty One*, who punished the stout Heart of the King of *Affyria*; who cut down the Thickets of his Forest, and lopped his Bough with Terror, *Isai. x. 34*. He gave *Moses* his Commission; gave *Moses* his Law; and was both the LORD, and the End, of that sacred, significant, mysterious Oeconomy, *Heb. iii. 3, 4, 5. Heb. xii. 26*.

It may be a delightful and profitable Employ, to examine the Harmony of the Old and New Testament, on this grandest of all Truths. We shall discover many infallible Proofs of our LORD's divine Nature, if We compare the Passages one with another. Observing how the Things, which, by the Apostles, are most expressly ascribed to *CHRIST*; are celebrated, by the Prophets, as the peculiar Attributes, incommunicable Perfections, of the only true GOD.—By Way of Sample, I take Leave to select the following Texts; each associated with his Mate, or corresponding Portion of Scripture. *Matt. iii. 3. Isai. xl. 3.—John xii. 41. Isai. vi. 1, 2, 3.—Rom. xiv. 10, 11. Isai. xlv. 22, 23.—1 Cor. i. 31. Jer. ix. 23, 24.—1 Cor. x. 9. Numb. xxi. 6, 7.—Eph. iv. 7, 8. Psal. lxxviii. 17, 18.—Heb. i. 6. Psal. xcvi. 7.—Heb. i. 8, 9. Psal. xlv. 6, 7.—Heb. i. 10, 11, 12. Psal. cii. 25, 26, 27.—Rev. i. 8, 11. Isai. lxi. 4. Isai. lxiv. 6. Exod. iii. 14.*

* *יהוה* which, I think, is put in Opposition to *יהוה* and forms a beautiful Contrast. *Ver. 10.*

and remained in a suspended Posture, while his People passed through their opening Lines.—Indeed, both Depth, and Height, and every Creature, have paid Him Homage, and done Him Service. And shall not We, my dear *Theron*, submit to his Righteousness? Submit! Shall We not embrace it; rely on it; and, with joyful Hearts, with triumphant Tongues, say, *There is none*, there is nothing, like it*.

Does not all Mankind agree to estimate the Merit of the Practice, according to the *Dignity* of the Person? If a Neighbour of inferior Rank, visit some poor afflicted Wretch, in a coarse Garret, and on a tattered Bed; it is no very extraordinary Favour. But if a Lady of the first Distinction, or a Nobleman of the highest Order, perform the same Office; it is a much more remarkable, a much more admired Instance of self-denying Charity. On the Foot of this Calculation, to what a *supereminent* Height will the Worthiness of our LORD's Obedience rise! It will rise, like some magnificent Edifice, whose Basis rests upon the Center; whose Dimensions fill the Hemisphere; and whose Turrets glitter in the Sky. Or rather, it will extend itself to Immensity; where Length, and Breadth, and all Dimensions are lost. Especially, if We consider—The *Names*, He bears; and the *Honours*, He receives—the *Works*, He has done; and those *mightier Works*, He is appointed to do.

The *Names*, He bears.—The Title, by which *JESUS* of *Nazareth* is distinguished in the heavenly World; the Name written on his Vesture,

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and on his Thigh, is *KING of Kings, and LORD of Lords* *.—The Description, which the incomprehensible JEHOVAH gives of the Surety for sinful Men, runs in this exalted Strain; *The Man that is MY FELLOW* †. Which the Apostle explains, in that memorable and majestic Clause; *He thought it no Robbery to be equal with GOD* ‡.—The
HOLY

* Rev. xix. 16.

† Zech. xiii. 7. יְמִיתִי *Contribulis vel Coequalis.* My Fellow, or my Equal.—The original Expression occurs nowhere, but in this Verse of Zechariah, and in the Book of Leviticus. In one Text it is explained by *Brother*, or Partaker of the same Nature. In every other Place, I believe, it will be found to signify, not barely a *Neighbour*, but an *Equal*; one who stands upon the same Level, with regard to the Claims of Equity, and the common Rights of Life.—In either Sense, it militates strongly for the Divinity of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

‡ Phil. ii. 6. Some Writers, I am aware, have endeavoured to interpret away this Evidence of our LORD's Divine Nature. But I think with great Injury to the Context, and no less Violence to the Phrase.

Ἀπαλαύσας, as far as I can observe, denotes, not the Prize or Spoil, but the *Act* of plundering or taking the Spoil; *Ip̄sarapiendi Actio*. Vid. STEPH. *Thesaur. Grac. Ling*—If so, the Text most naturally implies, that CHRIST counted it no Act of Robbery; no Invasion of Another's Prerogative; but looked upon it as his unquestionable Right, to be *equal with GOD*, and to receive all Divine Honours.—Nevertheless (αλλα, Rom. v. 14.) He was so far from tenaciously insisting upon, that He willingly relinquished the Claim. He was content to go forego the magnificent Distinctions of the CREATOR, and to appear in the Form of a Creature. Nay, to be made in the Likeness of the *fallen* Creatures; and not only to share the Disgrace, but to suffer the Punishment, due to the *meanest* and *wilest* among them all.—An Example of Humility, worthy to be displayed by the Eloquence of an Apostle, or the Tongue of an Archangel! Worthy to be the everlasting Pattern, and the everlasting Praise

HOLY GHOST, speaking of the Virgin's Son, enumerates several grand Distinctions, both of his Person, and his Office. He styles the Child, that should be born, *The WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR, the EVERLASTING FATHER, the MIGHTY GOD, the PRINCE OF PEACE* *.—The same inspired Writer, though eloquent above all Orators, and more sublime than the loftiest Poet, cries out in rapturous Astonishment; *Who can declare his Generation* †? What Pencil can paint, what Language

can of all Believers.—But an Example, infinitely depreiated, if We suppose its great Author, to be nothing more than a *Scrap* of Existence; for all his Qualifications a *Debtor*; nay, borrowing Leave even to be.

However *Ἀπασμῶς* be translated, the Strefs of the Argument, I apprehend, lies upon the Word *ἰσῶς*. If this signifies a *real* and *proper* Equality, the Proof seems, to me at least, irrefragable.—How shall We determine the exact Significancy of this important Word? By having recourse to *Homer's* Works, or to *Heathen* Authors? This, in case the *sacred* Writers will decide the Question, would be like going from *Jerusalem* to *Athens* for the Solution of a religious Doubt, even while the College of Apostles is assembled at the former City.—The Word occurs five or six Times in *their* Writings. They use it, it is true, in the adjective Form. But the Adjective is very sufficient to settle the Signification of the Adverb. If I know the Meaning of *ἰσῶς*, I shall be at no Loss to understand the Import of *ἰσῶς*.—See *Matt.* xx. 12. *Luke* vi. 34. *John* v. 18. *Acts* xi. 17. *Rev.* xxi. 16. In all which Places it expresses, not a bare Resemblance or Likeness only, but a real and proper Equality. As *Milton* speaks of *CHRIST*, alluding to this Passage, and finely illustrating its Sense;

Thron'd in highest Bliss,
Equal to GOD, and Equally enjoying
Godlike Fruition.

* *Isai.* ix. 6.

† *Isai.* liii. 8.

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can express, his matchless Excellencies? And may We not with equal Propriety demand; Who can declare the meritorious Perfection of his Righteousness? It is precious beyond Comparison: beyond Imagination.

The *Honours* which our LORD receives, are proportioned to the illustrious Characters, which He sustains.—*John* the Baptist, than whom a greater Prophet, or a better Judge, was not born of Woman, professes Himself unworthy, *to stoop down and unloose the Latchet of his Shoes* *: unworthy, though a burning and shining Light in his Generation, to perform the meanest Service to this PRINCE of Heaven.—*Stephen*, who leads the Van in the noble Army of Christian Martyrs, beheld such a Representation of his crucified MASTER's Glory; as enabled Him to *exult* with divine *Delight*, even amidst the furious Assaults of his Persecutors, and under the insupportable Blows of his Murderers †. Assured, that *JESUS* has all Power in Heaven and Earth, by an Act of the most solemn Worship, He *commits* his departing *Soul* (that unspeakably important Trust!) to the omnipotent Hand of his REDEEMER ‡.—Nor by the first Martyr alone, but in all Churches of the Saints, and in every Age of Christianity, has the LORD *JESUS* been addressed, as the constant Object of his People's *Adoration*; and acknowledged, as the ever faithful *Depository* of their eternal Interests.

When *Isaiah* beheld a visionary Manifestation of CHRIST ||, the first-born Sons of Light were waiting

* Mark i. 7. † Acts vii. 56. ‡ Acts vii. 59.
|| *Isai.* vi. 1, 2, &c. compared with *John* xii. 41.

waiting around Him, in Postures of dutiful Submission. These celestial Beings, whose very Feet are too bright for Mortals to view, veiled their Faces before his infinitely superior Effulgence. The Seraphs, who are all Zeal and all Love, celebrate his Perfections, and cried one to another, *The whole Earth is full of his Glory.*—And is not *Heaven* also filled with his Glory? Does not *Heaven* likewise resound with his Praise? The beloved Disciple, in a Vision no less clear and far more magnificent, beholds the LAMB that was slain, standing in the *midst* of a resplendent Throne. Which is most beautifully adorned with a circling Rainbow, and terribly dignified, by the Blaze of Lightnings; and awfully surrounded, with Peals of Thunder. Before this august Throne, and at the Disposal of the once slaughtered SAVIOUR, are *seven Lamps of burning Fire*; expressive of the DIVINE SPIRIT, in all the Variety of his miraculous Gifts, and sanctifying Graces*.—Four and twenty Elders, clothed in white Raiment, with Crowns on their Heads, and the Harps of GOD in their Hands, fall prostrate in deepest Homage before the LAMB. They strike the golden Strings, and sing that sublime eucharistic Hymn; *Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed Us to GOD by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation; and hast made Us, unto our GOD, Kings and Priests*†.

Behold the Hierarchies of Angels: they are in Number ten thousand times ten thousand—All are Children of the King immortal, and each is brighter than

* Rev. iv. 5. † Rev. v. 9, 10.

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than the Morning Star.—*Hark!* They raise their Voices, and awaken all the Powers of Harmony. Hosannas, loud and rapturous, fill the eternal Regions.—Do You enquire; *Who* is the Cause of this sacred Jubilee, and what is the Burden of this celestial Song? The very Person We are extolling, and the very Doctrine We would establish. *Worthy*, they cry, *worthy is the LAMB that was slain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Blessing.*—Nor these alone, but every Creature which is in Heaven, and on the Earth, and under the Earth, and such as are in the Sea, join the immense Chorus. In sweet responsive Strains of Melody and Devotion, they sing and speak Praises to IMMANUEL: *Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the LAMB for ever and ever* *.

This, You observe, is the devout Acknowledgment, not only of the Cherubim, the Seraphim, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect, but of every Creature.—The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, which garnish the *Heavens*—Beasts and creeping Things, Mountains and Hills, fruitful Trees and all Cedars, which replenish the *Earth*—Metals and Minerals, Gems and Fossils, the subterraneous Riches of Nature, or Things which are *under the Earth*—Even all those Objects, which my *Theron* lately contemplated, do, each in a proper Way, magnify the LORD JESUS. They bear witness to his Power, as their CREATOR; they are subservient to his Designs, as our MEDIATOR; and, in this Manner, they all glorify his holy Name.

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* Rev. v. 11, 12, 13.

Under such Views of the blessed REDEEMER, enlarged and elevated even to Astonishment, is it possible to *over-rate* the Worth of his Obedience? Is it possible to lay *too much* Stress on his expiatory Sacrifice, or ascribe *too much* Efficacy to his vicarious Righteousness.

To the Honours, which He receives, let Us add the *Works* which He has done. By these, in the Days of his Flesh, were displayed the Greatness of his Glory, and the Magnificence of his Majesty.

Behold! says the Almighty FATHER. *My Servant*; He who condescends to become my Servant in the matchless Work of Redemption; *shall deal prudently*, shall conduct Himself with all the Dignity and all the Sanctity of Wisdom. In consequence of which, *He shall be exalted, be extolled, and be very high* *.—The Paraphrase of the Jewish Commentators on this beautiful Climax is, though inadequate, not contemptible. “The MESSIAH, “they say, shall be higher than *Abraham*, more illustrious than *Moses*, and exalted above the Angels of Light, even above the *prime Ministers* † of “Heaven.”—What follows, is an Attempt to render this Exposition somewhat *less defective*.

Here, could You open my Chamber-door, and throw a Glance upon your Friend, you would find Him in the same Attitude, and under the same Perplexity, which were formerly observed in *Phaeton*. Sitting one Day, amidst an Assembly of the People, and preparing to make a public Oration,

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* Isai. lii. 13.

† *Prime Ministers*, this is almost a literal Translation of their Words, מלאכי השרת

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He appeared uncommonly thoughtful. Being asked the Reason, "I am considering, said He, how I " may shorten, what I shall have Occasion to speak." —The Compass of my Subject, would demand many Volumes; whereas, the Limits of my Letter, will allow but a few Paragraphs.

Our LORD gave Sight to the *Blind*. He poured Day upon those hopeless and benighted Eyes, which had never been visited with the least dawning Ray.—The *Dumb*, at his Command, found a ready Tongue, and burst into Songs of Praise. The *Deaf* were all Ear, and listened to the joyful Sound of Salvation.—The *Lame*, lame from their very Birth, threw aside their Crutches, and full of Transport and Exultation, leaped like the bounding Roe*. —He

* We have the finest Representation of this Event, given Us by the inspired Historian, *Acts* iii. 8. *And He leaping up, stood, and walked, and entered with them into the Temple; walking, and leaping, and praising GOD.*—The very Language seems to exult, in a redundant Flow of expressive Phrases; just as a poor Cripple, who never knew either the Comfort of bodily Vigour, or the Pleasure of local Motion, may be supposed to do, when suddenly and unexpectedly blessed with both. He would exert his new acquired Powers again and again; first in one Attitude, then in another. Sometimes to try, whether He was really healed, and not under the pleasing Delusion of a Dream; sometimes from a Transport of conscious Delight, and to express the Sallies of Joy that sprung up in his Heart.

Though I acknowledge Mr. Pope's Description to be extremely beautiful,

————— *The Lame their Crutch forego,
And leap exulting like the bounding Roe;*

yet I cannot persuade myself, that it is to be compared with St. Luke's Draught, either in the Variety of Figures;
in

—He restored *Floridity* and *Beauty* to the Flesh, emaciated by consuming Sickneſs, or encruſted with a lotheſome Leproſy. — All Manner of *Difeaſes*, though blended with the earlieſt Seeds of Life, and riveted in the Conſtitution by a long inveterate Pre-
dominancy—Difeaſes, that baffled the Skill of the Phyſician, and mocked the Force of Medicine—*theſe* He cured, not by tedious Applications, but in the Twinkling of an Eye; not by coſtly Preſcriptions, or painful Operations, but by a *Word* from his Mouth, or a *Touch* from his Hand; nay, by the *Fringe* of his Garment, or the bare Act of his Will.

Any one of theſe Miracles, had been enough to endear the Character, and eternize the Memory of another Perſon. But they were *common* Things, Matters of *daily* Occurrence, with our Divine MASTER. The Years of his public Miniſtry, were an unintermitted Series of ſuch healing Wonders; or, if any Intermiſſion took place, it was only to make way for the more invaluable Miracles of ſpiritual Beneficence.—Let Us conſider theſe Things, my dear Friend. Let Us purſue and dwell upon theſe Hints. Let Us familiarize to our Minds the Power and Glory of *CHRIST*. Then We ſhall ſee abundant Cauſe to acknowledge — with Gratitude and Joy to acknowledge, That our *Help* is laid upon *ONE* that is mighty *. That He is the *Rock*, and his *Work* is perfect †.

Behold in the Richneſs of Colouring; or in that Exuberance of Style, which, on this Occaſion, is ſo happily ſignificant, and ſo perfectly *pictureſque*.

* Pſal. lxxxix. 19.

† Deut. xxxii. 4.

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Behold Him exercising his Dominion over the vegetable Creation. A *Fig-tree*, adorned with the most promising Spread of Leaves, but unproductive of the expected Fruit, *withers away* at his Rebuke. It is not only stripped of its verdant Honours, but dried up from the very Roots *, and perishes for ever. A fearful, yet significant Intimation, of that final Ruin †, which will overtake the *specious Hypocrite*. Who, while lavish in outward Profession, is destitute of inward Piety.

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* Mark xi. 20.

† It is pleasing to observe, that the two Miracles, in which our LORD displayed his *punitive* or *vindictive* Power, were exercised, not on the human Race, but on this insensible Vegetable, or some unclean Animals.—With regard to the latter Case, the Case I mean of the *Swine*, precipitated into the Deep, and perishing in the Sea, much opprobrious Clamour has been raised. As though the Action was *injurious* to the Property of the Owners.—Not to mention various Considerations, which prove the Wisdom and Benignity of our LORD's Procedure, I would only ask the Complainer or the Caviller, Whether it was not, according to the *Mosaic Law*, an Act of righteous *distributive Justice*?

That was a bitter, and, I think, an uncharitable Reflection, made by a satyrical Person, upon hearing of Bishop Kidder's Calamity, in the Palace of *Bath and Wells*. (He and his Lady were killed, by the Fall of a Stack of Chimnies.) *What Business had He there?* intimating, that He was treated as He deserved. That He was an Intruder into the Preferment, and an unjust Supplanter of the pious (ejected) Bishop Kenn. But We may very truly, and very justly, apply the sarcastic Interrogation, on this Occasion; *What Business had the Swine among the Gaderenes?* Wherefore did the Sons of Israel debase and defile themselves, with this unclean Beast? It was a Kind of *contraband Goods*; prohibited by the Statute Law of their Kingdom; and for that Reason, a legal Forfeiture. So that to seize, confiscate, or destroy it, was only to administer Justice, and execute the Law.

His Eye looked through the *World of Waters*; discerned the Fish, which had just swallowed a Piece of silver Coin; and guided its Course to *Peter's Hook* *. 'Tis true, when the Gatherers of the *sacred Tax* came, to collect his Share for the Reparation of the Temple; He had not a Sufficiency of Money, to satisfy so small a Demand †. Yet He takes occasion, from this most abject Poverty, to manifest the Immensity of his Riches. He makes the great Deep his *Revenue*; and bids the scaly Nations bring him their *Tribute*. Never was such Indigence associated with such Magnificence! And never, never let Us forget, that the Indigence was ours, the Magnificence all his own!

The *Waters* themselves, it may be said, are far more unmanageable, than their Inhabitants. Who can controul that *outrageous Element*? Which has destroyed so many gallant Fleets, with the Armies they bore; and which would laugh at the Opposition of the united World.—The *LORD JESUS* walks upon its rolling Surges ‡. The rolling Surges,

* *Matt. xvii. 27.* How wonderful is this seemingly little Miracle! Or rather, what a *Cluster* of Wonders is comprized in this *single Act*!—That any Fish, with Money in its Mouth, should be caught—with Money just of such a Value—and in the very first Fish that offered itself—What a pregnant Display of *Omniscience* to foresee, of *Omnipotence* to over-rule, all these *fortuitous Incidents*!

† About Fourteen-pence.

‡ *He treadeth upon the Waves of the Sea*, is one of the Prerogatives ascribed to the Supreme BEING, *Job ix. 8.* The original Word *בַּמַּיִם* signifies a Sea, that rolls *Mountain-high*; and such, We have Reason to suppose, were the Waves on which our *LORD* walked; since the Vessel, to which He bent his Course, was *βασιλικὴν*, *lasted*

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Vol. III

Surges, suspend their Fury; they even forget their fluid Nature, to support the Footsteps of their GOD.—He speaks, and the most tempestuous Agitations are a Calm. The madding Ocean, like the dispossessed Demoniac, comes to the Feet of JESUS, sedate, and peaceable, and in its right Mind. It is true; *the Waves of the Sea are mighty, and rage horribly; but yet the LORD, who loved Us, and washed Us from our Sins in his own Blood, is mightier **.

The *Winds* are yet more ungovernable, than the madding Ocean. When these are hurled † abroad, to shake the Earth, and toss the Seas, Who can curb their Rage? What can *withstand* their Impetuosity? Even the boisterous Winds hear the SAVIOUR's Voice; and, as soon as they hear, obey. His Voice, more powerful to restrain, than brazen Dungeons to confine, chides ‡ the furious Whirlwind.

lashed, battered, tormented, by their vehement Concussions. Matt. xiv. 24.

* Psal. xciii. 5.

† This is the literal Translation of that beautiful Hebrew Phrase, which occurs *Jonah i. 4.*—The sacred Writer, describing the stormy Messenger, which was dispatched to arrest a fugitive Servant, says *וַיִּפְּחַת*—The LORD *hurled forth* a great Wind. The same Expression is applied to *Saul*, (1 Sam. xviii. 11.) when He started his Javelin at *David*, with a Design to transfix and nail Him to the Wall.—What an elegant, and how awful an Image! Storms and Tempests, with all their irresistible Fury and dreadful Ravages, are like *missive Weapons* in the Hand of JEHOVAH. Which He launches with greater Ease and surer Aim, than the most expert Warrior emits the pointed Steel.

‡ *Chides*—This is the Meaning of that fine expressive Word, *ἐπιμαρτυροῦ*, *Matt. viii. 26.* Which sets the Miracle
Vol. III. G in

Whirlwind. The furious Whirlwind is awed into immediate * Silence. That which a Moment ago, heaved the Billows to the Clouds, and filled with Outrage the howling Firmament; now, gently whispers among the Shrouds, and scarcely curls the smooth Expanse.

Something there is, even within the narrow Compass of our own *Breasts*, which affords Room for more signal Exertions of DEITY, than the turbulent Billows, or the resistless Storm. Agreeably to the Suggestion of a Prophet; *For lo! He that formeth the Mountains; and createth the Wind; and, as a more pregnant Proof of divine Perfection, declareth unto Man what is his Thought, the GOD*

in the most striking Light, and gives Us the grandest Idea of the Person, who wrought it. The Historian says not, *He set Himself to oppose*, like a General at the Head of his Troops; *He strictly commanded*, like a King issuing solemn Orders from his Throne; but *He rebuked*, like a Father chiding a heedless Child, or a Master reprimanding a negligent Servant.—It is one of the most unfurmountable Difficulties; it is absolutely the most marvellous Effect in Nature; yet accomplished only by a *Nod* from JESUS CHRIST.—The same Language, most gracefully majestic, our LORD uses, when speaking by his Prophet; *Behold! at my Rebuke (יבליע) I dry up the Sea.* Isai. 1. 2.

* *Immediate*—This Circumstance, as very much *grandizing* the Miracle, is, with great historical Propriety, remarked by the Evangelist. The Sea is known to have a prodigious *Swell*, and very tremendous Agitations, for a considerable Time after the tempestuous Wind ceases: On this Occasion, and in Obedience to its MAKER's Will, it departs from the *established* Laws of Motion.—No sooner is the Word spoken, but there is a *Calm*; not an advancing, but an *instantaneous* Calm; not a partial, but a *perfect* Calm. *Mat. viii. 26. Mark iv. 39.*

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of Hosts is his Name *. The Possessor of such surpassing Power and Wisdom, can be no other, than the Supreme and only Potentate.—And who is this, but JESUS CHRIST? He knew, what was in Man †. He discerned the Secrets of the Heart; discerned the latent Purpose, before it disclosed itself in Action; even before it was uttered in Speech; nay, while it lay yet an unformed Embrio in the Mind.

His Glance pierced into *Futurity*: espied Events, in all their Circumstances ‡, and with the greatest Perspicuity, before they came into Being. The *hidden* Things of Darkness were open, the *Contingencies* of the Morrow were present, to his all-pervading Eye. Nay, the unthought-of Revolutions,

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* Amos iv. 13. Μελέτων θεσπλος τοιο παρεχων τεκμηριον, το τα απορητα ειδεναι της διανοιας. *Chrysost.*

† John ii. 25. This all-discerning Intelligence of the DEITY, is very emphatically expressed by the Psalmist, *Psal. cxxxix. 1, 2, &c.* Though the Sentiment, in one Clause, seems to be somewhat weakened by our Version. *There is not a Word in my Tongue*, would have a nobler Turn, and more extensive Meaning, if rendered; *Even BEFORE the Word is on my Tongue, Thou, O LORD, knowest it altogether.* בי אין מלה בלשוני, *Etsi nondum Sermo est in Lingua mea.*

‡ In all their Circumstances—See a very remarkable Exemplification of this Particular, *Mark xiv. 13.* *There shall meet you*—not barely a Person, but the Sex and Age are both specified—not two, or several, but one Man—not within any given Space of Time, but at the very Instant of your Arrival—not empty-handed, but bearing a Vessel—not of Wood or Metal, but an earthen Pitcher—filled, not with Wine or Milk, but with Water—carrying it into that very House, where the Preparation was made, and the Passover was to be celebrated.—What a Multitude of Contingencies! All minutely foretold by our LORD!

that were to happen in distant Ages; the astonishing Catastrophe of dissolving Nature, and the awful Process of everlasting Judgment; all these He clearly foresaw, and particularly foretold.

Nor does He only penetrate the Recesses, but over-rule the Operations of the Soul.—He so intimidated a Multitude of sacrilegious Wretches, that they fled, not before his drawn Sword, or bent Bow, but at the Shaking of his single Scourge *.—He so awed, by one short Remonstrance †, an Assembly of conceited and ostentatious *Pharisees*; that they could neither gainsay, nor endure the Energy of his Discourse. Though not to gainsay, was a tacit Acknowledgment of their Guilt; and not to endure, must cover them with public Confusion.—With a Word, the most mild and gentle ‡ imaginable, He flung Terror into a whole Band of armed Men.

* *John*. ii. 14, 15, &c. *St. Jerom* looks upon this Miracle, as one of the greatest, which our SAVIOUR wrought. And indeed the Circumstances are very extraordinary.—That one Man should undertake so bold, and execute so hazardous a Task—One Man, without a Commission from *Cæsar*; without any Countenance from the Jewish Rulers; without any Arms, either to terrify the Multitude, or defend Himself.—That He should cast out the whole Tribe of mercenary Traffickers; wrest, from those Worshipers of Wealth, their darling Idol; and trample under Foot their great *Diana*—And all this without any Tumult or Opposition; not one of the sacrilegious Rabble, daring to “move the Hand, or open the Mouth, or peep.”—Whoever reflects on the fierce and ungovernable Nature of an incensed Populace; or considers the bitter and outrageous Zeal of *Demetrius* and the Craftsmen, on a less irritating Occasion; may possibly find Himself almost, if not altogether, of the *Latin* Father’s Opinion.

† *John* viii. 7.

‡ *John* xviii. 6.

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† *Gen.* i.

Men. Such as blasted all their Courage; and laid them as if struck with Lightening, *stunned* and *prostrate* on the Ground.

All Hearts are in his Hand. He turneth them, as the Rivers of Water, whithersoever He will *; with as much Ease, and with the same efficacious Sway, as the Current of the Rivers is altered and determined by every Inflection of the Channel.—Follow me, was his Call to James and John: Follow me †, was all He said to Levi the Publican. Though the first were engaged in all the Ardour of Business; though the last was sitting at the very Receipt of Custom; yet both He and they, without any Demur, without the least Delay, left the lucrative Employ; left their nearest Relations, and resigned their *earthly All*, to attend a poor and despised MASTER.—Their Acquaintance, no doubt, would remonstrate a thousand Inconveniences. Their Enemies would not fail to censure them, as rash Enthusiasts. But all these Considerations were lighter than Dust, were less than nothing,

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* Prov. xxi. 1.

† Mark ii. 14. He said in the Beginning, *Let there be Light*; there was Light. *Let there be a Firmament*; it was spread abroad. *Let there be a World*; it arose of Nothing.—In the Days of his Flesh likewise, He speaks, and it is done. His Word is a Work. He says to the Disciples, *Follow me*; they come—to the Leper, *Be clean*; He is cleansed—to the Paralytic, *Arise, take up thy Bed, and walk*; it is all performed, as soon as commanded.—Surely then We must confess, that the Voice, which is so mighty in Operation, is the Voice of a GOD, not of a Man!—*Genethlon* is our LORD's usual Word, when He grants a miraculous Cure: which exactly corresponds with that admired and magnificent Expression Gen. i. 3.

thing, when set in Competition with *two Words* only from *JESUS* of Nazareth. Impressed, deeply impressed by his powerful Summons, such Loss they counted Gain, and such Obloquy Glory.—And shall We count it too high an Honour, or too grand an Office, for his *Obedience unto Death*, to make Us perfectly righteous before GOD, without the Co-operation of any Works, or any holy walking of our own?

He planted Bowels of Compassion in the unfeeling avaricious Wretch; and *elevated*, beyond the Height of the Stars, Desires that lay *groveling* even below the Mire of the Swine. The *Slaves* of Sin He restored to the *Liberty* of Righteousness; and unhappy Creatures, who were degenerated into the Likeness of the Devil, He renewed after the Image of the blessed GOD.—These were the Effects of his personal Preaching; these are still the Conquests of his glorious Gospel; and do not these declare his Dominion over the Intellectual Oeconomy? That the *World* of *Minds*, as well as of material Nature, is open to his Inspection, and subject to his Controul?

The *Dead* seem to be more remote from human Cognizance, than the Secrets of the Breast; less liable to any human Jurisdiction, than the warring Elements. What Potentate can issue a *Writ of Release* to the Grave? Or cite the dislodged Soul, to re-enter the breathless Corpse?—Yet this, even this, our mighty MEDIATOR executed. He opened the Eyes, which were *sunk* in Shades, and *sealed* in the Tomb. He bid the Heart, that had forgot its vital Motion, spring into Life and Activity. The crimson Flood, long congealed by the

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icy Hand of Death; which had not only lost its Pulse by *Stagnation*, but likewise changed its very Texture by *Putrefaction* *; circulates, at his Order, all florid and mantling with Health †, through the wondering Veins. — The *Spirit*, which had taken its Flight into the *invisible* State, which had taken its Place in eternal Habitations, returns, at our REDEEMER's Signal, to the Tenement of mouldering Clay; and, by the amazing Visit, proclaims his Sovereignty over those *unknown Realms*, and their mysterious Inhabitants.

As He recals from, so He admits into, the Abodes of future Happiness. His Hands, when swollen with Wounds, and nailed to the Tree, evidently sustained the *Keys of Hell and of Death* ‡. Then, even then, He opened and He shut either the Gates of the Grave, or the Portals of Paradise. What He says to the penitent Thief, is the Language of supreme Authority; *To Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise* §. It is a royal *Mandamus*. He

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speaks

* John xi. 39.

† *Mantling with Health*—Such was the State of those Bodies, which our LORD raised from the Dead. Not weak and languid, like Patients beginning to recover, from a tedious or violent Illness. On the contrary, they were no sooner alive, than perfectly well. Their Appetite, their Vigour, and every happy Concomitant of Health, returned together with their Life.—To demonstrate this wonderful Circumstance, and render it more observable, our SAVIOUR, when he rescued the Ruler's Daughter from the Dominion of Death, commanded to give Her Meat. A Command, which, superficially considered, might seem unworthy of Notice. But viewed in this Connection, appears graceful and important; such as tends, if not to aggrandize the Miracle, yet to place it in the most striking Light. See *Luke* viii. 55.

‡ Rev. i. 18.

§ *Luke* xxiii. 43.

speaks from the Cross, as from a Throne. While executed as a Malefactor, He not only dispenses Pardon, but disposes of Seats in Glory.

Does our LORD's Superiority extend to those malignant Beings, the Devil and his Angels? — Even these, in spite of all their formidable Strength *, and inextinguishable Rage, He makes his Footstool. He brake the Teeth of those infernal Lions; and rescued the helpless Prey, on which their bloody Jaws were closing. At his Command, they abandon their Conquests; and relinquish, however *indignant*, however *reluctant*, their long-accustomed Habitations. His *single* Command, more forcible than *ten thousand* Thunderbolts, dis-

possesses

* *Milton*, describing the Power of the apostate Angels, says;

————— *The least of Whom could wield
These Elements; and arm Him with the Force
Of all their Regions.*

Book VI. 221.

This I lay before the Reader, but dare not avouch for Truth, because it is not confirmed by Scripture. Thus much however, is evident from our unerring Book; That their Might is very great, and very formidable. *Satan* is called *The GOD of this World*. 2 Cor. iv. 4. He and his Angels are styled, *The Rulers of the Darknes of this World*. Eph. vi. 12. They had for many Ages, obtained an absolute Dominion, not over a few Kingdoms only, but over all the Nations of the Earth, *Judæa* only excepted. The Apostle teaches Us to consider the Opposition of Flesh and Blood, even of all Mankind, though associated in one hostile League; as far less to be feared, than the Enmity and Rage of *Principalities, and Powers, and spiritual Wickednesses*. — After such an Account of our invisible Enemies, should not We cry mightily to our Captain, and their Conquerour? “LORD, never leave “Us, nor forsake Us. But hide Us under the Shadow “of thy Wings, and cover our Heads in the Day of “Battle!”

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possesses a whole Legion * of those fierce and haughty Spirits: drives them, all terrified and deprecating severer Vengeance, to seek Rest in solitary Desarts, or to herd with the most sordid Brutes.

As the blessed *JESUS* treads upon the Necks of those Powers of Darkness, He receives the willing Services of the *Angels of Light*. The Angels, in comparison of Men, are styled *Gods*. How great must be their Lustre and Glory! Since their very Appearance struck Prophets almost dead with Fear, and tempted even an Apostle to Idolatry. Yet, when the first-begotten SON is brought into the World, these Gods are commanded to worship Him †. Though they *excel* ‡ in Strength, and are
active

* Mark v. 9.

† Compare *Heb.* i. 6. with *Psal.* xcvi. 7.

‡ Would any One see a Sketch of the Glory and Excellence of the angelic Nature? Let Him see it, in that inimitably fine Stroke of the sacred Pencil. *I saw another Angel come down from Heaven, having great Power, and the Earth was lightened with his Glory.* Rev. xviii. 1. The last Clause is, I think; one of the most masterly Touches of descriptive Painting, extant in History, Poetry, or Oratory. *Milton* gives Us a Stricture of the same Kind, and on the same Subject. But the *poetic Flight*, though very sublime, is greatly inferior to the *apocalyptic Vision*.

— On He led

His radiant Files, dazzling the Moon.

In this Case, We have a whole Brigade of celestial Warriors; in the former, only a single angelic Being. Those are represented, as irradiating the *Night*, and outshining the *Moon*: this, as exceeding the Brightness of the *Sun*; diffusing additional Splendors on the *Day*; and illuminating, not a vast Plain, not a vaster Kingdom, but the whole Face of the Globe.—If such be the Lustre of the
Servant,

active as Flames of Fire; yet they fulfil his Commandment, and hearken unto the Voice of his Words. They graced the Solemnity of his Birth; they attended Him, after his Temptation in the Wilderness; they were the first joyful Preachers of his triumphant Resurrection; and, seated as He is on the Right-hand of the MAJESTY in the Highest,

*They stand with Wings outspread,
Listening to catch their Master's least Command,
And fly through Nature, e'er the Moment end.*

Behold Him, now, doing according to his Will, in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth—Swaying the Sceptre, over the Legions of Hell, and the Powers of Nature—Exercising Dominion, in the Hearts of Men, in the Territories of the Grave, and the Mansions of disembodied Spirits.—Doing all this, not as a Delegate, but as a Sovereign. Not by a communicated Ability but by his own Omnipotence. Pursuant to the Tenour of that Majestic Claim, *My FATHER worketh, and I work*†. Not, my FATHER worketh *by* Me; but, I work in Concert with the FATHER. I perform the same marvellous Things; from the same underived Power; and by the same supreme Authority†.

Then
Servant, what Images can display the Majesty of the LORD? Who has *thousand Thousands* of those glorious Attendants *ministering unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before Him*? Dan. vii. 10.

† John v. 17.

† This is evidently the Sense, in which the Jews understood

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Then let my *Theron* determine—under such Views of our SAVIOUR's unequalled Majesty, and unbounded Sovereignty, let Him determine—whether it be safer, to rest our infinite and eternal Interests, on *our own* Righteousness, rather than on *His*.

We have selected some few Manifestations of our REDEEMER's *excellent Greatness*. Even the Evangelical Historians, give us no larger a Porportion of his astonishing Deeds, than the First-fruits bear to a copious Harvest. Yet, were they all particularly enumerated, and circumstantially displayed, they would appear inconsiderable; compared with those far more distinguished Trophies of Almighty

derstood our LORD: otherwise, they would not have charged Him with the supposed Blasphemy, of making *Himself equal with GOD*, Ver. 18.—This is no less evidently the Meaning, which our LORD intended to express; as appears from his own Explanation of the Passage. *Whatsoever Things the FATHER doeth, these also doeth the SON likewise; ταυτα, ομοιως, The self-same Things, in the self-same Manner*. Ver. 19.—From hence St. Chrysostom very forcibly evinces, τα μονογενες την προαιωνιον, υπαρχιν, την δημιουργικην δυναμιν, την εξουσιαν την αυθεντικην, το απαλλαντον αυτε το προς τον πατερα, the eternal Existence, the underived Power, the all-creating Agency of the SON, and his absolute Equality with the FATHER. Πως εν τοις μωσις τινες υπεργον λεγειν τον υιον; πως αν ειη υπεργος ετος, ει απε ο πατηρ ποιει, ταυτα και ο υιος ομοιως ποιει; πω γαρ το ομοιως, η ο μιν υπεργος, ο δε δημιουργος; How then dare Any presume to style the SON of GOD a subordinate Agent? How can He be subordinate, if He acts in the very same Manner with the Almighty FATHER? If the One be supreme, and the Other subordinate, the το ομοιως the Sameness of Acting cannot subsist. There is an evident Disproportion, an utter Disparity.

mighty Power, which He has decreed, in some future Period, to erect *.

He will gather to his sacred Fold, the People of his antient Church; though they are *dispersed* into all Lands, and most inveterately *prejudiced* against the Truth of his Gospel.—How mighty was his Hand, how illustriously outstretched his Arm, when He made a Path through the Surges of the Ocean; drove the Torrent of *Jordan* backwards; and fetched Rivers of Waters from the flinty Rock! Far more mighty will be its Operations, when He shall remove the seemingly unsurmountable Obstructions, to the general *Restoration* of the *Jews*; shall throw all their religious Apprehensions into a new Channel;

* The Dignity of our LORD, considered as the CREATOR and PRESERVER of all Things, is not mentioned *Here*; because, something of this Kind is professedly attempted, in *The Descant upon Creation*, subjoined to the first Volume of *Meditations among the Tombs*, &c. To which I beg Leave to refer my Readers. And shall more than make amends for the present Omision, by transcribing a Passage from the *Night-Thoughts*; which presents Us with a magnificent Display of this great Truth.

—THOU, by whom all Worlds
Were made, and one redeem'd; whose regal Power
On more than adamantine Basis fix'd;
O'er more, far more than Diadems and Thrones
Inviolably reigns; beneath whose Foot,
And by the Mandate of whose awful Nod,
All Regions, Revolutions, Fortunes, Fates,
Of High, of Low, of Mind and Matter, roll
Through the short Channels of expiring Time,
Or shoreless Ocean of Eternity.

Night-Thoughts, N^o IX.

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nel; and cause Tears of penitential Sorrow to start from their stony Eyes, Confessions of unfeigned Faith to issue from their blaspheming Lips.—Yet thus it will assuredly be. In the Volume of the divine Book it is written, *They shall look on Him, whom they have pierced, and mourn**. They shall adore as the MESSIAH, the once despised Galilean; and fix all their Hopes of final Felicity on that very PERSON, whom their Fathers slew and hanged on a Tree.

Amazing Revolution in the religious World! Yet this, together with the Destruction of *Anti-christ*, and the Illumination of the benighted *Gentiles*, may pass for *small* Incidents; compared with those stupendous Events, which will dignify, and signalize the closing Scene of Affairs.

Then, shall the LORD JESUS be manifested in unspeakable Glory; and exert such Acts of Omnipotence, as will be the *Terror* of Hell, the *Joy* of Heaven, the *Wonder* of Eternity.—Then, will He put an end to Time, and bid the Springs of Nature cease to operate.—Then, shall his tremendous Trumpet rend the universal Vault, and pierce the Dormitories of the Dead.—Then, will He *shake the Earth out of its Place* †, and before his majestic Presence the *Heavens shall flee away* †.—

Then

* Zech. xii. 10.

† Job ix. 6.

‡ How grand is the Idea, when *David* prays! *Bow thy Heavens, O LORD, and come down; touch the Mountains, and they shall smoke.*—Much grander is the Image, when He says: *The Springs of Waters were seen, and the Foundations of the World were discovered, at thy Chiding, O LORD.*—Transcendently and inimitably grand is *this* Description, though given in the plainest Words, and
the

Then shall, not a Nation only, but Multitudes,
Multitudes

the most artless Manner. *I saw a great white Throne, and HIM THAT SAT ON IT, from whose Face the Heavens and the Earth fled away, and there was no Place found for them.* Rev. xx. 11.

In *Virgil's* admired Representation, *Jupiter* hurls his Thunder and a Mountain falls at the Stroke;

Ille flagranti
Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia Telo
Dejicit.

Georg. I. 331.

In *Homer's* more terror-striking Piece, *Neptune* shakes the wide-extended Earth. The Mountains tremble to their Center; the Ocean heaves its Billows; and Cities reel on their Foundations.

Αὐλας ἐνερθε Ποσειδάων εἰναξε
Γαίαν ἀπείρεσση, ὄρεων τ' αἰπείνα κάρηνα,
Πάρος δ' ἐπασσέωλο ποδες πολυπίδακ' Ἰδης
Και κορυφαί, Τρωάδε πόλιν, και τις Ἀχαιῶν.

Hiad. γ. 57.

Here, the SON of the eternal GOD appears only, and all Nature is alarmed: nor Heaven nor Earth can keep their Standing: they flee away, like the frightened Roe.—What aileth Thee, O thou Earth, that thou fleest? And Ye Heavens, that Ye make Haste to escape? Surely, they speak, by this precipitate Flight, the inconceivable Grandeur of their Judge. Nor can the Tongue of Men and Angels speak it so emphatically.—How groveling are the loftiest Excursions of the Grecian and Roman Muse, compared with this Magnificence and Elevation of the prophetic Spirit!

Let Us consider the Passage a little more attentively. *Videt hæc sub Luce videri.* Masterly Performances, the more closely they are examined, the more highly they charm.—It is not said, A few Herds of the Forest, a few Kings, or Armies, or Nations; but the whole System of created Things, *The Heavens and the Earth.*—It is not said, They were thrown into great Commotions, but they fled intirely away; not, they started from their Foundations,

Multitudes of Nations, *be born in a Day**; yea rather, in an Hour, in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye.—All that are asleep in the Beds of Death; even those who, perishing in *Tempests*, are sunk to the Bottom of the Ocean; or, swallowed up by *Earthquakes*, are buried at the Center of the Globe; all shall hear his Voice; and hearing, shall awake; and awaking, shall come forth.—Every human Body, though Ages have revolved, since it gave up the ghost; though Worms have devoured the Flesh, and Dissolution mouldered the Bones; though its Parts have been grinded by the Teeth of Beasts, or consumed by the Rage of Fire; dissipated in viewless Winds, or scattered over the boundless Globe; lost to our Senses, and lost even to our Imagination; yet will every human Body then be restored; its Limbs reassembled, and not an Atom wanting; its Frame rebuilt, and never be demolished more.

Then, shall the unnumbered Myriads of departed Spirits return from their separate Abodes; and, commissioned by HIM *who is the Resurrection and the Life*, reanimate each his organized System.—Then, shall Satan and his Accomplices, those execrable

Foundations, but they *fell into Dissolution*; not, they removed to a distant Place, but *there was found no Place for them*; they ceased to exist; they were no more.—And all this, not at the strict Command of the LORD JESUS; not at his awful Menace, or before his fiery Indignation; but at the *bare Presence* of his Majesty, sitting with serene but adorable Dignity on his Throne.

If this is not the *true Sublime*, in its utmost Scope, Force, and Beauty; I must confess, I never saw it, nor ever expect to see it.

* *Isai. lx. 8.*

ecrable and horrid Criminals, be dragged from their Dungeons of Darknefs, and receive their Doom at the REDEEMER's Tribunal.—Then, will Misery and Happinefs, both consummate, and both everlasting, be awarded by *JESUS* of *Nazareth*.—Then, will He consign over the *ungodly* World, and the rebellious Angels, to Flames of Hell, and to Agonies of Despair. Then, will He invest the *Righteous* with the Inheritance of Heaven, and inflate them in the Fulness of Joy.—His Word is Fate. His Sentence is irrevocable. Immutability seals, and Eternity executes, whatever He decrees.

And has *this JESUS*, so glorious, so majestic, so adorable—has HE vouchsafed to take our Nature, and become our Righteousness? Was HE made under the Law? Did HE fulfil all its Demands? Give perfect Satisfaction to the *penal*, and yield perfect Obedience to the *preceptive*? On purpose, that the Merit of *all* might be made over to Us?—Astonishing Condescension! Ineffable Grace! What Thanks are due, to such infinitely rich Goodness!—What a Remedy is here, for the Impotence and Guilt of fallen Man!—What a sure Foundation of Hope, what an abundant Source of Joy, to every One that believeth?

It is declared by the Oracle of GOD, That *such an HIGH-PRIEST* became Us, was absolutely necessary for our obnoxious and ruined Condition, *who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners**—*who is Heir of all Things, and the Bright-*

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ness of the eternal *FATHER's* Glory*. It appears, I flatter myself, from the Letter already in your Hand, That *CHRIST* fully answers the former Character. From this Epistle, I hope it will appear, That He is the very Person described in the latter Text. From both, that He is what his Prophet styles, *A SAVIOUR and a great One*†.

Estimate now, my dear Friend, estimate if You can, the Dignity and Excellency of this Sublime PERSON. Then may You learn, how to state the *Worth* of his Righteousness, and the *Degree* of Affiance suited to his Merits. Rather you will perceive, that his spotless Birth, his perfectly obedient Life, his exquisitely bitter Death, are a Satisfaction of unknown Dignity; *precious*‡, far beyond all the Graces of Men, and all the Duties of Angels; *able* to save to the uttermost, all that rely on them, and come unto GOD through them.

Consonant to this, are the Sentiments of that penetrating Critic and profound Scholar, Dr. *Lightfoot*. Who, treating of the same Subject says—

“Add to all this the Dignity of his Person, who
“performed this Obedience: that He was GOD
“as well as Man: and his Obedience is infinite.
“Such as, in its Validity, subdued Satan, and in
“its All-sufficiency satisfied the Justice of GOD.”

—After which, our celebrated Author makes this important and delightful Improvement; “Think,

“*Christian*, what a Stock of Obedience and Righteousness here is for thee, to answer and satisfy

VOL. III.

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“for

* Heb. i. 2, 3.

† Isai. xix. 20.

‡ This is expressed by the sacred Historian, with an Energy which no Translation can equal; τὴν τιμὴν τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης οὐκ ἐκείνου ἀπὸ υἱοῦ ἰσχυροῦ. Matt. xxvii. 9.

“ for thy Disobedience and Unrighteousness, if
 “ Thou become a Child of the Covenant. Here
 “ is enough for every Soul that comes to Him,
 “ be they never so many. Like the Widow’s Oil
 “ in the Book of *Kings*, there is enough and enough
 “ again, as long as any Vessel is brought to re-
 “ ceive it*.” So that a Sinner, enriched with
CHRIST’s Righteousness, has no Need to wish
 for any Thing; cannot possibly obtain any Thing;
 to render him more completely righteous in the
 Sight of **GOD**.

We do not wonder, that *Gentiles*, who are ignorant of the **REDEEMER**; that *Jews*, who treat Him with contemptuous Scorn; that *Professors* of Religion, who deny his eternal **GOD-HEAD**; place little, place no Confidence in his Righteousness. But it is strange, that *Christians*, who know the **SAVIOUR**; who acknowledge his Divinity; and believe Him to be exalted above all Blessing and Praise—it is exceedingly strange, that they do not *rejoice* in Him; *make their boast* in Him; and say, with a becoming Disdain, of every other Dependence, *Get ye hence* †!

The Obedience of **CHRIST**!—The Obedience of **HIM**, who walketh in the Circuit of the Skies ‡, and all the Kingdoms of the World are reputed as Nothing before Him!—The Obedience of **HIM**, who doeth according to his Will, in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth §!—The Obedience of **HIM**, who is Alpha and Omega; the Beginning and the End-
 ing;

* *Lightfoot’s Works*, Vol. II. p. 1258. † *Isai. xxxii.*
 22. ‡ *Job xxii. 14.* § *Dan. iv. 35.*

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ing; which is, and which was, and which is to come; the Almighty *!—Doubtless, *such* Obedience must be deserving, truly deserving, of all that Grace and Glory, which are and will be communicated to his People, in every Period of Time, and through all Ages of Eternity. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain. No wonder, that *such* Obedience should justify the Ungodly. Should make Us poor fallen Creatures righteous—perfectly righteous in the Sight of GOD—without the Concurrence of any good Works, or any holy Duties of our own †.

Such an Assemblage of divine Perfections, must warrant, must demand, the most unreserved and the most unbounded Confidence. — There never was, no, not in all Ages, nor in all Worlds, any thing greater or richer, *more* dignified or exalted, than the Obedience of our LORD.—Nay; it is impossible to imagine, what could be *so* suited to our Wants, *so* proper for our Reliance, or *so* sure to answer, more than answer all our Expectations.

Remember what the Apostle affirms, and you will not wonder at my Assertion. *In HIM dwell*—

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* Rev. i. 8.

† May we not, in this Sense, understand the Words of the LORD, delivered by his Prophet? *Look unto ME, and be Ye saved all the Ends of the Earth; for I am GOD, and there is nothing else.* Isai. xlv. 22. *I am GOD*: this is the grand, all-dignifying, infinitely momentous Circumstance. *There is nothing else* (אֵין עוֹד) for a Sinner to trust in. He *can* have nothing else, look where-ever He will. He *need* have nothing else, be his Exigencies ever so great.—A GOD incarnate, undertaking his Redemption! A GOD incarnate, becoming his Righteousness, and the Author of his Salvation! This comprehends all that He can want. To this no Addition can possibly be made. It is unspeakably more, than He can wish, or think.

eth all the Fulness of the GODHEAD *badily*. How comprehensive and exalted is this Description! It collects into a Point all the Rays of Majesty and Honour. It expresses in a Sentence, I say not whatever this Pen has written, but whatever of Dignity and Excellence the Bible itself contains.—*The GODHEAD*, the very Nature and Essence of the DEITY—*The Fulness* of the GODHEAD; unerring Wisdom, almighty Power, and whatever the great JEHOVAH challenges as his own—*All* the Fulness; every incommunicable Attribute, in the most ample Measure, and in the highest Degree—All this *dwells*, not visits occasionally, but *statedly*, invariably, eternally resides—Resides in CHRIST JESUS *badily*; with an Union inconceivably close and intimate. Insomuch that the GODHEAD inhabiting, and the Manhood inhabited, make but one and the same marvelous, matchless, adorable PERSON.

Therefore, adds the sacred Disputant, *ye are complete in HIM**. Never was any Conclusion more weighty in itself, or founded on more solid Principles. Being united to CHRIST, and interested in CHRIST, Ye are filled with all that Fulness, which Man can receive, or GOD bestow.—He says not, *Ye shall be*; at some distant Period, or in some future State. But, *Ye are*; in this present Life, and at this very Hour. Ye are not

* Col. ii. 9, 10. Πληρωμενοι, *impleti, perfecti* dicuntur, Colossenses in CHRISTO Mediatore, ut qui πληρωμα plenissimæ & perfectissimæ illius Obedientiæ, qua ob omni Legis Jugo, & a Peccatis liberandi, & ex adverso omnibus Bonis ipiritualibus & æternis ad Salutem, beandi erant, per Imputationem haberent. Vid. Stockiam in Voc. πληρωμα.

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only pardoned, but reconciled; and not only reconciled, but accepted as righteous; nay, ye are—
 and what can be said or desired more?—ye are COMPLETE. And not barely before Men or Angels, but before infinite Purity and Omniscience itself. And this, without the Concurrence of your own Deeds, only by being Partakers of HIM, who is the Head of all Principality and Power. In whom, *Ye are made*, what neither Adam in Paradise could boast, nor Angels in Heaven can claim, THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.—Amazing, charming Truth! What a Fountain is this, or rather what a Sea of fathomless Depth, to obliterate all Sins, and supply all Wants! What a Mirrour of stupendous Grace, and ever to be adored Loving-kindness!

Here let our Meditations fix, and here let all our Expectations center. From this, not from any thing of our own, let Us derive our Peace, our Joy, our supreme Complacency,—Into this Subject We can never dive too deeply. Of this Subject we can never think too magnificently. The Righteousness of CHRIST is the Master-Pillar, on which our present and eternal Welfare rests.

There hangs all human Hope: that Nail supports

Our falling Universe.

This renders his Intercession prevalent. He is an Advocate, a successful Advocate with the FATHER. Why? Because He is JESUS CHRIST the Righteous*.—From hence results his Ability to justify. He shall justify Many, faith

* 1 John ii. 1.

faith the LORD JEHOVAH. On what Consideration? Because He is my *righteous Servant**.—This, and no other, is the meritorious Cause of our Salvation. *Judah shall be saved*; shall escape Damnation, and inherit Glory. On what Account? On Account of the *righteous BRANCH* raised up unto David†.—Since then our Acceptance, Justification, and Salvation; since our Comfort in Time, and our Happiness to Eternity, all depend upon the Righteousness of CHRIST; how should we delight in contemplating its *faultless*, its *matchless*, its *transcendent* Excellency!—Grand! All-sufficient! In every Circumstance perfect!—Nothing equal to it, on Earth, in Heaven, throughout the Universe!—Surpassing the Multitude of our Sins and the Enormity of our Guilt! Surpassing all, that Men can express, or Angels conceive! Being truly, properly, absolutely DIVINE!

And is this Righteousness mine? Is this Righteousness yours, *Theron*? Is this Righteousness free for every Sinner? Pleasing, captivating, rapturous Thought!—Who can forbear exulting and triumphing, in the boundless Blessing. On such an Occasion, methinks, some Sallies of Enthusiasm, or even some Starts of Tautology, are the Language of Sensibility, of Propriety, of Nature.

Isaiah

* *Isai. liii. 11.*

† *Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.* I believe, it will be needless to observe, that the Salvation, mentioned in this and other Passages, of like Import, is not limited to a *temporal* Deliverance, but extends to a State of spiritual and *eternal* Happiness. The temporal is only a subordinate Blessing: a Kind of Appendage to the other: somewhat like the *Halo* round the Globe of the Moon, or that *faint* and *secondary* Range of Colours, which frequently attend the glowing Rainbow.

Isaiah thought it such an inexhaustible Source of Joy, as should fill, more than fill the Heart of Sinners. Should overflow all Bounds, and pervade the whole Creation. Should ascend to the highest, descend to the lowest, reach the remotest, and affect even the most insensible Parts of the Universe. Therefore He cries; *Sing, O ye Heavens; for the LORD, the LORD Himself, hath done it.* Our justifying Righteousness is finished; finished by JEHOVAH, sojourning in human Flesh. *Shout ye lower Parts of the Earth: break forth into Singing, ye Mountains: O Forest, and every Tree therein, join and augment the general Joy. For the LORD has, in an infinitely magnificent and an infinitely perfect Manner, redeemed Jacob; and glorified Himself in this most adorable Method of recovering Israel**, more than by all his other marvelous Works.—O for the Tongue of a Seraph!—But even this would be defective: such Ardour cold, and such Energy languid.

I have done: I add no more: I leave it—to some future Letter? to some more labour'd Essay? No; but to the Hymns of Heaven, and the Adorations of Eternity, to supply the Deficiency of my Acknowledgments.—In the mean Time, let me intreat my *Theron* to contemplate our LORD JESUS CHRIST, under that gracious and glorious Character, described by the Prophet, *A PRIEST upon his THRONE*†. Dignifying the sacerdotal Censer by the regal Diadem; adding all the Honours of his eternal Divinity, to the Sacrifice of his bleeding Humanity.—Then, I promise myself, You

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will

* *Isai.* xliv. 23.

† *Zech.* vi. 13.

will find it almost impossible, not to adopt the emphatical and ardent Protestation of the Apostle; *GOD forbid, that I should glory, that I should confide, save only in the Cross of CHRIST JESUS my LORD*; and in the consummate, divine, everlasting Righteousness, finished on that bloody Tree.

When You made the Tour of *France* and *Italy*; and, crossing the *Alps*, gained the Summit of some commanding Ridge—When you looked round, with Astonishment and Delight, on the *ample Plains*; which, crouded with Cities, and adorned with Palaces, extend their beauteous Tracts below—When You surveyed the *famous Rivers*, which roll in shining Dignity along the fruitful Vallies; stating the Boundaries of Kingdoms, and wafting Plenty through the Nations—When You shot your transported View to the *Ocean*, whose unmeasurable Flood meets the Arch of Heaven, and terminates the Landscape with inconceivable Grandeur—Did You, then, choose to forego the Pleasure resulting from such a Prospect, in order to gaze upon the *naked Cragg* of some adjacent Rock? Or, could You turn your Eyes from those magnificent Objects, and fasten them with pleased Attention upon a *shallow Puddle*, that lay stagnating at your Feet?

You, Who have beheld the Scene, can accommodate the Simile, with peculiar Advantage. For which Reason, I shall wave the Application. Only I would claim the Liberty of a Friend, and once more beg, with a benevolent Importunity beg of You, to consider diligently this mysterious Righteousness, which is both GOD's and the Christian's. GOD's, as to its Origin and Excellency. The Christian's, as to its Use and Enjoyment.

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Ignorance of this Doctrine, leads into two of the most dangerous Mistakes, and pernicious Evils—an *unavailing Attempt* to establish our own Righteousness—and a *fatal Resolution* of not submitting to the Righteousness of GOD. Therefore, I cannot forbear transcribing into my Paper, what is often breathed in Supplication from my Lips—

“ O Thou GOD of infinite Glory! thou
 “ GOD of unbounded Goodness! thou GOD
 “ of immensely rich Grace! Who hast given thy
 “ own adorable SON, to be the Atonement for
 “ all my Sins; to be my Righteousness, my Portion,
 “ and my Salvation—to be a better Righteousness
 “ for me, than the most perfect Obedience, perform-
 “ ed through ten thousand Years—to be a better
 “ Portion for me, than all the Riches in Heaven
 “ above, and in the Earth beneath—to be a more
 “ complete Salvation for me, than my Heart could
 “ wish, or my very Thoughts imagine—O! give
 “ me, give my Friend, an enlightened *Understanding*,
 “ that *We may know HIM that is true*, and know
 “ Him as our own. Give Us the inestimable Bless-
 “ ing, that *We may be in HIM that is true*, even
 “ in thy SON JESUS CHRIST. For, this
 “ SAVIOUR is the true GOD, and thus to know
 “ Him is eternal Life *.”

My Theron needs no Argument to convince Him, that such a Prayer is an Act of *rational and real* Friendship; is the most genuine and substantial Proof, that I am

His truly affectionate

ASPASIO.

LET-



L E T T E R IX.

THERON to ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

YOUR two Letters have reached my Hand; and I hope, they have not missed my Heart. I might inform You, what Pleasure they gave me, and how highly I esteem them. But You desire no such Compliments. You desire to see me impressed with the Sentiments, and living under their Influence. This would be the most acceptable Acknowledgment to my *Aspasio*, because it would be the most happy Effect to his *Theron*. May every Day, therefore, bring a fresh Accession of *such* Gratitude to me, and of *such* Satisfaction to You!

To watch for my Soul, and pray for my Salvation, I am thoroughly convinced, is the truest Instance of rational and exalted Friendship. Every Claim to that amiable Character, is *defective* and *vain*, if it does not extend to our spiritual Interests, and our everlasting Welfare. For which Reason, I need not intreat *You* to continue and perpetuate this best Exercise of social Kindness. Or if I do, it is rather to testify how much I prize the Favour, than to prompt your affectionate and ready Mind.

Your last found me at a Friend's House, which lies pretty near the western Ocean.—Yesterday,

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waked by the Lark, and rising with the Dawn *, I strolled into the fragrant Air, and dewy Fields. While, as *Shakespear* with his usual Sprightliness expresses himself,

Focund Day
 Stood tip-toe on the misty Mountain's Top.

Sweet was the Breath of Morn, and sweet the Exhalations of the freshened Flowers—Grateful were the soft Salutes of the cooling Zephyrs, attended with the Charm of earliest Birds—Delightful the Sun, painting with his orient Beams the Chambers of the Firmament, and unveiling the Face of universal Nature.

My Mind, but little affected with these inferior Entertainments, was contemplating an Object of infinitely superior Dignity. Contemplating that Adorable BEING, who raised—from *nothing* raised this stupendous System of Things; and supports—with his *Word* supports the magnificent Frame. Who (to speak in the Language of his own SPIRIT) *openeth the Eyelids of the Morning, and commandeth the Day-spring to know its Place* †.

Com-

* *Evandrum, ex humili Tecto Lux suscitata alma,*
Et matutini Volucrum sub Culmine Cantus. VIRG.

Lux alma—A lovely Expression! Describing the Mildness, the Beauty, and the cheering Efficacy of the rising Sun. It is, I think, incapable of an *equal* Translation; but reminds me of a very fine Comparison in our *sacred Eclogues*, which represents the charming Appearance, and the benign Influence of the Gospel-church, at its first Opening on the *Gentile World*—*Who is this that looketh forth as the Morning?* Cant. vi. 10.

† Job xxxviii. 12.

Commandeth the Light, by its punctual and pleasing Ministrations, to draw aside the Curtain of Darkness, and discover the Skies, shining with Glories; and disclose the Earth, blooming with Beauties.

FATHER of Light and Life, said my transported Mind,

Thou GOOD SUPREME!

Teach me what is good! Teach me THYSELF.

Save me from Rolly, Vanity and Vice;

From every low Pursuit! and feed my Soul

With Faith, with conscious Peace, and Virtue pure,

Sacred, substantial, never-fading Bliss*.

Wrapt in Wonder, and lost in Thought, I rambled carelessly along, till I was insensibly brought to the Shore. Which, in these Parts, is prodigiously high and strong: perfectly well fitted, to stand as an everlasting Barrier †, against the impetuous Stroke of conflicting Winds, and the ponderous Sweep of dashing Surges.—Not that the Omnipotent ENGINEER has any Need of these impregnable Ramparts. Here, it is true, they intervene; and not only repress the rolling Invader,

but

* THOMSON'S Winter.

† These, doubtless are "the Doors and the Bars," which the ALMIGHTY mentions in the Course of his awful Interrogatories to Job. The massy Doors, which can never be forced; the solid Bars, which can never be broke; and I may add, the conspicuous Columns, on which his Providence has inscribed that sovereign Mandate, *Nē plus ultra*. Or, as the Prohibition runs in his own majestic Words, *Hitherto shalt thou go, but no farther; and here shall thy proud Waves be stayed.* Job xxxviii. 11.

but speak the supreme uncontrollable Power of their MAKER.—In *other* Places, all such labour'd Methods of Fortification are laid aside. The CREATOR shews the astonished World, that He is confined to no Expedients; but orders all Things, according to the Pleasure of his own Will. He bids a low Bank of despicable Sand, sustain the Shock, and curb the Rage of furious assailing Seas. *Though the Waves thereof toss themselves, with incredible Fierceness, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, and seem to menace universal Destruction, yet can they not pass over* * this slightest of Mounds.

A winding Passage broke the Declivity of the Descent; and led me, by a gradual Slope, to the Bottom.—The Moon being in her last Quarter, and the Tide at its greatest Recess, I walked for a while, where briny Waves were wont to flow.—The ebbing Waters had left a vacant Space, several Furlongs broad; equal in Length, to a very extended Vista; smooth on its Surface, as the most level Bowling-green; and almost as firm, as the best compacted Causey. Insomuch, that the Tread of a Horse scarce impresses it, and the Waters of the Sea never penetrate it.—Exclusive of this wise Contrivance, the searching Waves would insinuate themselves into the Heart of the Earth. The Earth itself would be *hallow* as an Honey-Comb, or *bibulous* as a Sponge. And the Sea, soaking by degrees through all its Cavities, would, in Process of Time, forsake its Bed, and mingle with the Plains and Mountains. But this closely cemented

or

* Jer. vi. 23.

or glutinous Kind of Pavement, is like *claying* the Bottom of the universal Canal. So that the returning Tides consolidate rather than perforate its Substance. By keeping it perpetually moist, they prevent the Sun from cleaving it with Chinks. —Such, I hope, will be the Case, with this Soul of mine, and the Temptations that beset me. Beset me they do, they will. But may they never win upon my Affections, nor gain *Admittance* into my Heart! Let them make me humble, and keep me vigilant; teach me to walk closely with my GOD, and urge me to an incessant Dependence on *CHRIST*. Then, instead of being *ruinous*, they may become *advantageous*; and instead of shattering, will only cleanse the Rock, on which they dash.

The mighty Waters, restless even in their utmost Tranquility, with a solemn * but placid Murmur, struck my Ear. The Billows, sometimes advancing to kiss the Sand; sometimes drawing back their curly Heads into the Deep; whitened, at their Extremities, into an agreeable Foam. Which, with the reflexive Representation of the azure Canopy, formed the Appearance of a majestic floating Mantle; tinged with a beautiful Blue, and edged with Fringes of Silver.—*Dignity and Elegance,*

* This is described with inimitable Delicacy by HOMER;

Βῆ δ' αἰὼν παρὰ δινὶ πολυφλοισβοῖο θάλασσης.

There is, in the very Sound of the Epithet πολυφλοισβοῖο, such a fine expressive Propriety; so happily adapted to the majestic Roar of the Ocean, and the pompous Swell of the Waves,

Qualem nequeo monstrare, & sentio tantum.

gance, I find, are the inseparable Characteristics of the CREATOR's Workmanship. As *Comfort* and *Happiness*, I sometimes perceive, are the very Spirit of his Gospel, and the genuine Produce of his Commands.

How numerous are these Sands! Bid an Accountant take the Number of them. His Imagination recoils at the very Thought. "Number them! No; not the millionth Part, even in a thousand Years. Or should Time and Ability suffice, Figures would fail, and Words be insufficient."—Nothing in the whole Round of Creation, can suggest a finer Image, to represent the greatest Multitude. It brings to my Mind one of the most picturesque and beautiful Passages, which I have met with in any Language. The Passage occurs in that noble Piece of historical and poetical Painting, the lxxviiith Psalm. It describes the prodigious Quantity of Quails, with which the bountiful Hand of JEHOVAH victualled, if I may so speak, the *Israelitish* Camp. *He rained Flesh upon them as Dust, and feathered Fowls like as the Sand of the Sea.*—*Rained*, is a very bold Metaphor; admirably expressive of Copiousness—*As Dust*; which in some parched Season, and near some populous City, covers and overwhelms the public Road—*Like the Sand of the Sea*; is an Advance upon the preceding Comparison, and displays the miraculous Supply in a more striking Light. Methinks, I see the feathery Legions, lying Heaps upon Heaps; closely wedged, in vast Extent, and proportionable Depth. Resembling those Beds of Sand, which the ever working Surges have,

have, for Years and Ages, been throwing up, on, the Confines of the Ocean.

The Sand of the Sea! One would imagine, this Comparison was emphatical enough, to denote any Multitude. But in one Instance, it is incompetent; it falls short. In denoting the profuse Liberality of JEHOVAH to his unworthy Creatures. Consider the Multiplicity of Conveniencies, Comforts, Delights, which He has commanded every Element to afford Us. Consider the various Blessings which his sparing, delivering, protecting Providence has vouchsafed Us. Consider those better, far better Things, which the Gospel of his Grace offers to Us, in this World; and which his infinite Goodness has prepared for Us, in another World. Consider all this, and We may truly say, He poureth his Benefits around Us: He heapeth his Mercies upon Us: yea, his Mercies and his Benefits, are *MORE in Number than the Sand.*

The Sand, in another View, excites the Idea of great Extent, or large Capacity. Those Waters are wide, but this Border of encircling Gravel is wider still. It may be called the Rim of the Vessel, which contains the unmeasurable Waves. Are any Arms extended to such a Length, as those which stretch themselves quite round the World of Waters? Within whose ample Circumference, the Surges of the Atlantic and Pacific, the Billows of the northern and the southern Ocean, find Room to spread, and swell, and roll at large? Once again let me admire the uncommon Boldness, and exquisite Propriety of the Scriptural Comparisons. They set forth the Wisdom of Solomon, by this most apposite

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apposite and magnificent Image. *GOD gave Solomon Wisdom and Understanding exceeding much; and Largeness of Heart, extensive and capacious, even as the Sand that is upon the Sea-shore.*

A single Glance on his Accomplishments will evince the Truth of this Character.—As a Moralift, *He spake three thousand Proverbs*; weighty with Sense, concisely worded, and of excellent Use in the Conduct of Life.—As a Poet, *His Songs were a thousand and five*; embellished (if We may judge from the Specimen, that is come down to our Hands) with the richest Imagery, animated with the tenderest Affection, and ennobled with the most refined Sentiments.—As a Philosopher, He had an extraordinary Insight into the Myfteries of Nature. For He made Observations on the Animals, which inhabit every Element; their Natures, their Qualities, their Uses. He spake also of *Trees, from the Cedar-Tree, that is in Lebanon, even to the Hyssop, that springeth out of the Wall.*—Yea; so unconfin'd was the Compass of his intellectual Abilities, that *He gave his Heart to seek and to search concerning all Things, that are done under the Sun.* With such Success did He prosecute his Inquiries, that *there came of all People to hear the Wisdom of Solomon.* Studios Persons, from all the neighbouring Nations, resorted to his Court; that they might learn from this consummate Scholar, and kindle their Tapers at his Lamp. What added unspeakable Lustre to these distinguished Endowments, they were so many Handmaids to the great Mistress of all, divine Grace. He taught both Subjects and Foreigners, to *fear GOD and keep his Command-*

ments. Making all his Lectures subservient and conducive to true Religion.

Was ever Mind so wonderfully enlarged, and so richly furnished? Yet, when he comes to cast up the Reckoning, to acquaint Us with the Sum total of his Acquirements, He places this humbling Acknowledgment, at the Foot of the Account; *That which is wanting, cannot be numbered.* Much I have searched; much I have found; but *that which is wanting*, that which is still to be discovered, is incomparably more. The Objects of Science are an unbounded Abyfs. I have only skimmed the Surface, and coasted the Shores. What remains to be explored, in those vast Spaces, which lie between the Range of a finite Mind, and the Perfections of the infinite GOD; this surpasses the Power of Language to tell, or of Arithmetic to count. *It cannot be numbered.*—Admirable Man! I know not which are most conspicuous, the Humility and Modesty of his Sentiments; the very superior Strength of his Faculties, and the vast Compass of his Knowledge; or the noble Similitude, by which the latter are displayed.

On one Side, the *Atlantic Main* rolled its Surges from World to World.—*Immense, immense* Diffusion of Waters! What a Spectacle of Magnificence! What an irresistible Incitement to Reverence and Awe! How it fills the Mind, and amazes the Imagination! 'Tis the grandest and most august Object under the whole Heavens. It reminds me of that apocalyptic Vision, which *John*, the inraptured Seer, beheld! *As it were a great Mountain burning with Fire, was cast into the Sea, and the third Part*

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* Rev. v

xxxviii. 8,

the Sea became Blood; and the third Part of the Creatures which were in the Sea, and had Life, died; and the third Part of the Ships were destroyed *. I have not Penetration enough, to discover the spiritual Meaning of this Passage; but, I discern a most dreadful Grandeur, in its plain and literal Sense.— If We consider the wonderful Compass, and the terrible Force of such an enormous Mass of Fire; if We consider its horrible and destructive Effects, on such a vast Body of Waters, as the third Part of the Ocean; how tremendous and astonishing is the Idea! Surely, nothing but divine Inspiration could suggest these Images; as nothing but an Almighty Arm can execute this Vengeance. Who would not fear an eternal KING, that has such Weapons and such Artillery, reserved against the Day of Battle and War †.

Spacious as the Sea is, GOD has provided a Garment, to cover it. Profound as the Sea is, GOD has prepared swadling Bands, to inwrap it. Ungovernable as it may seem to Us, He over-rules it with as much Ease, as the Nurse manages a new-born Infant ‡. An Infant it is, before Almighty Power; and to an Infant it is compared, by JEHOVAH Himself; though, to our Apprehension, it raves like a stupendous Madman.— Tossing mighty Fleets, with their Thousands and Millions of Tons, like a Tennis-Ball; and shattering them, with their Ribs of Oak and Iron, like an Egg-Shell.

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Yet

* Rev. viii. 8, 9.
xxxviii. 8, 9.

† Job xxxviii. 23.

‡ Job

Yet if GOD commands, this outrageous Element opens a peaceful Bosom, and receives his People. It smoothes the Way for their Passage, and stands as a Bulwark for their Defence. They march *through the midst of the Sea upon dry Ground, and the Waters*, in hanging Heaps, or rather in fluid Mountains, *are a Wall unto them on their Right-hand and on their left* *.—If he reverses his Mandate, they drive down, with an irresistible Sweep, upon the Hosts of *Pharaoh*; and overwhelm the Chariots and Horses of *Egypt*. They pour Confusion upon Arrogance †, and disappoint the Designs of Persecution and Cruelty.—If He says, *Be still*: the bellowing Surges are hushed; and the gentlest Lamb is not so quiet. If He says, *Destroy*: even the quiescent Waters kindle into Rage; they rise in their MAKER's Cause; and ten thousand Lions, stung with Hunger, and rushing upon their

* Exod. xiv. 22.

† *Arrogance*—This is described with exquisite Delicacy, in the *Ennion* or triumphant Song of *Moses*. *The Enemy said, I will pursue; I will overtake; I will divide the Spoil; my Lust shall be satisfied upon them: I will draw my Sword, mine Hand shall destroy them.*—What swelling Words of Vanity are here! The very Spirit of a *Thrajo* breathes in every Syllable of this beautiful *Prosopopæia*. Never was the Language of *Bluster*, *Ferocity*, and *Rhodomantade*, so finely mimicked.—How noble is the Turn, and how exalted the Sentiment, which follows! *THOU didst blow with thy Wind; the Sea covered them; they sank as Lead in the mighty Waters.* The GOD of *Israel* need not summon all his Power, or level the right-aiming Thunder-bolts; He only gives a Blast with the Breath of his Displeasure, and the great Mountain breaks like a Bubble. All this insolent and formidable Parade is quashed; sinks into Nothing; expires in Shame and Ruin. *Exod. xv. 9, 10.*

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their Prey, are not so fierce. When He bids them execute any other Commission; the Horse broke to the Bit, the Spaniel disciplined to the Signal, are not half so dutiful and obsequious.—Shall *our Passions* be more wild and headstrong than the Winds; more turbulent and ungovernable than the Billows? Forbid it, Almighty LORD! Thou that *rulest the Raging of the Sea, and the Noise of his Waves*; restrain, subdue, and calm the *Madness of the People*.

The Eye travels hard. It wanders over a vast Length, and vast Breadth of fluctuating Plains*. It reaches the Limits of the Horizon, where Skies and Waves seem to mingle. Yet it has scarce made *an Entry* upon the World of Waters.—Was I placed on the Summit of *Atlas*, or could I take a Survey from the Peak of *Teneriffe*, even in this commanding Situation, I should discern no more, than the *Skirts of the great and wide Sea*. Tracts of amazing Magnitude, swell and float all around; yet Tracts incomparably broader, are still behind; and Tracts of unbounded Extent, are behind even those.

Great then, O my Soul, inconceivably great, must that adored and glorious SOVEREIGN be, who *sitteth upon this Flood*; and the World of Waters, is but as the Footstool to his Throne†. Nay; Who holds the mighty Waves, diffused as they are from Pole to Pole, in the Hollow of his Hand; and before whom, in all their prodigious Dimensions, they are but as the Drop of a Bucket.

I 3

—How

* ————— *Campesque natantes.*

LUCRET.

† Psal. xxix. 10.

—How shall Reptiles of the Ground sink *low enough* in their own Apprehensions! What Humiliation can be sufficiently deep for sinful Mortals, before this “High and Holy ONE!” Yet how may they *rise* on the Wings of Hope! How may they *joar* on the Pinions of Faith! When, in the Language of his Prophet, and in his own SON’s Name, they thus address the everlasting GOD. *Awake! Awake! Put on Strength, O Arm of the LORD! Awake, for our Succour and Security, as in the antient Days, in the Generations of old. Art Thou not it, that bath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon? Art Thou not it, which bath dried the Sea, the Waters of the great Deep? That bath made the Depths of the Sea, a Way for the Ransomed to pass over.*?*

How grand, surprisingly grand and majestic, are the *Works*, as well as the Attributes of an Omnipotent BEING! What are all the Canals in all the Kingdoms of the Earth, compared with this immense Reservatory! What are all the superb Edifices, erected by royal Munificence, compared with yonder Concave of the Skies! And what are the most pompous Illuminations of Theatres and triumphant Cities, compared with the resplendent Source of Day! They are a *Spark*, an *Atom*, a *Drop*.—Nay, in every Spark, and Atom, and Drop, which proceeds from the Hand of the ALMIGHTY, there is the Manifestation of a Wisdom and a Power absolutely incomprehensible.

Let

* Isai. li. 9, 10. Θαυμα παραδοξον, says Chrysostom! Τολμ γαρ πρωτον επιδειν ηλιος θαλασσαν & ωλειομενην, αλλα σπιντομενην, πελαγος ουχι κωπαις και πλοιαις, αλλα αυτον ιππων σπρωμενον.

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Let us examine a single Drop of Water, the very least Quantity, which the Eye can discern; only so much, as will just adhere to the Point of a Needle. In this almost imperceptible Speck, a famous Philosopher computes no less than *thirteen thousand* Globules. Amazing to conceive! Impossible to explicate!—If then in so small a Speck, abundantly more than ten thousand Globules exist, what Myriads of Myriads must float in the unmeasured Extent of the Ocean!—Let the ablest Arithmetician try to comprehend in his Mind, not the internal Constitution, but only the *Number* of these fluid Particles. As well may He grasp the Winds in his Fist, or mete out the Universe with his Span, as execute the Task.—If then we are utterly unable to number (which is the *most superficial* of all Researches) even the most common Works of the great JEHOVAH; how can We pretend to lay open the Secrets, and penetrate the Recesses of his infinite Mind! How can We pretend to investigate the whole Process, and solve all the Difficulties, of that *highest* and *deepest* of the divine Schemes, REDEMPTION!

I have sometimes been offended, I must confess, *Aspasio*, when You have enlarged upon the *mysterious* Truths of *Christianity*. And I have often been surpris'd, to observe, in our LORD's Character, the joint Appearance of human Weakness and heavenly Majesty. To see Him encompass'd with every bodily Want, and every innocent Infirmary; yet claiming every divine Perfection, every Attribute of that peerless ONE, who shares not his Glory with another.—But I perceive, the Beam was in my own Eye, when I fancied, the Mote

was in my Friend's. The Mist was not on the Scriptures, but Darkneſs on my own Apprehenſions.

Is there, in every Ray of Light, and in every Particle of Matter, a Depth of Contrivance unfathomable by the Line of any human Underſtanding? And ſhall there be nothing abſtruſe or profound, nothing but what is level to our ſcanty Apprehenſions, in the great * Things of GOD's Law, and the glorious † Things of his Goſpel? To expect this, is juſt as wiſe in itſelf, and juſt as congruous to Nature, as to expect—a Sea, whoſe Cavities might have been digged by our Spade—a Sky, whoſe Arches are meaſurable by our Compaſſes—a Sun, whoſe Orb may be included in our Lanthorns.

When therefore I read of ONE uncreated and eternal BEING, ſubſiſting in THREE Divine PERSONS ‡; when I hear of an infinitely pure and perfect GOD, made Fleſh for the Redemption of ſinful Men; when I meditate on the righteous and univerſal JUDGE, reconciling the World unto Himſelf, by the Death of his own SON;

* רַבִּי תוֹרָתִי Hof. viii. 12.

† Τα μυστήρια το Θεου, Acts ii. 11.

‡ It is well ſaid, by an anonymous Author; “ while the Scripture clearly diſtinguiſhes thoſe Works, where in the DEITY appears acting alone, it alſo points out THREE, who are often declared to be ONE, as acting each his Part in the ſame Work. And particular Care is taken to aſcribe every divine Work and Perfection to HIM, who humbled Himſelf unto Death; that the Evidence might be very clear, where the Objection might ſeem ſtrongeſt; and this not in a few more obſcure Paſſages, but in the moſt open Manner throughout the Scripture.”

SON;—when a thousand curious and inquisitive Thoughts are ready to arise on the Occasion; I will bid them first sound the Depths of a *single* Drop, and then apply their Plummets to the *boundless* Ocean. This, I am very sure, is not weak Credulity, nor wild Enthusiasm; but the maturest Dictate of Reason, and the very Precision of Truth.—Let then the great CREATOR make that sublime Declaration; *As the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are my Ways, than your Ways; and my Thoughts than your Thoughts* *. Let every human Creature add that humble Acknowledgment; *O the Depths of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of GOD! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out* †! And not Devotion only, but Reason and Truth, will say *Amen* to both.

You see, *Aspasio*, how I am trying to adopt your Spirit. You will observe the willing Scholar, though not the great Proficient.—But stay! Is this right? To divert from such commanding Subjects, and take notice of mere Punctilios?—My Friend may spare his Frowns. I am surprised and angry at myself. Away with the little Arts of Self-recommendation. *Self* should be forgot, should be *swallowed up* and *lost* in devout Astonishment, when We are viewing the Magnificence, and meditating on the Wonders of Creation.

Behind me, and far off to the North, *Cambria's* dusky Coasts just, and but just, emerged. Lost were all her Woods and Mountains. Instead of ornamented Towns, and cultivated Plains, a *confused*

* Mai. lv. 9.

† Rom. xi. 33.

fused Mist, or a low-hung Cloud, seemed to hover on the Ocean's remotest Brim.—*Behind me!* Remembrance is roused at the Expression, and Conscience sharpens her Sting. Ah! how often and how long, have I treated in this very Manner, the noblest Scenes, and the sublimest Joys! Have *turned my Back*—ungrateful and besotted Creature!—upon the heavenly Country, and wandered from the Regions of infinite Delight! Therefore now they appear *dim*. I have scarcely a Glimpse of their transcendent Excellencies. Or if I see them by Faith, it is with frequent Intermissions, and much Obscurity.—Turn me, O Thou GOD of my Salvation, turn me from pursuing Phantoms, and attach me to thy blessed Self. Let me henceforth steer an invariable Course to IMMANUEL's Kingdom. May its Treasures, as I advance, *open* to my View, and its Glories *brighten* in my Eye. O! may some Odours, better, far better, than *Sabæan* spicy Odours*, exhale from the delectable Hills, and the celestial Shores!—But chiefly thou eternal SPIRIT breathe upon my Soul, both by thy *convincing* and *comforting* Influences! Nor ever cease to swell my Sails, and speed my Progress; till I arrive at *the Land, that is very far off*. *That happy Land, where I shall see* the

* Alluding to those Lines in MILTON.

————— *As when to them who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
Mofambic, off at Sea North-east Winds blow
Sabæan Odour, from the spicy Shore
Of Araby the blest, and many a League
Chear'd with the grateful Smell old Ocean smiles.*

Book IV. 159.

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the KING, the KING of Grace and of Glory, in all *his* transcendent and ineffable Beauty*.

On my Left-hand, stood a Range of *mountainous Cliffs*. They arose, not sloping, but in a perpendicular Direction. Rocks piled on Rocks! Huge; black; horrid! Frowning over the Flood, and extending themselves, as far as the Eye could reach. Here, bending inwards to the Land; there, bellying out into the Deep; every where projecting a Shade, several Leagues a-cross the Ocean.

The *Height* of these Cliffs so formidable, that every human Creature who comes near the Summit, starts back *terrified* and *aghast*. Only a few straggling Goats venture to graze on the Top: and these, to a Person walking below, appear but as Specks of moving White. While the Seagulls, that winnow the Air about the middle Steep, look like winged Animalcules, pursuing their little Sports in a different Region.—The *Aspect* of these Cliffs so *wild* and *horrid*, it is impossible to behold them without a shivering Dread. The Spectator is apt to imagine, that Nature had formerly suffered some violent Convulsions, or been shattered by the flaming Bolts; and that these are the dismembered Remains of the dreadful Stroke. The Ruins, not of *Persepolis* or *Palmyra*, but of the World!

Amazing! What adventurous daring Creature is yonder, gathering *Samphire* from the Cavities of the Rocks! He has let Himself down several Fathom, beneath the bleak and dizzy Summit.—He gleans a poor Livelihood, from the Edges of Danger, shall I say? Rather from the *Jaws* of Death.

* *Isai.* xxxiii. 17.

Death *. I cannot discern the Rope, to which he clings. He seems to be suspended over the tremendous Precipice, by a Thread, by a Hair, by Nothing.—I'll look no longer. The very Sight chills my Veins. While I view his perilous Elevation, I can think of nothing but a headlong Downfal, and fractured Bones; of Brains left to reek on the pointed Crag, and Blood streaming on the discoloured Beach.

Suppose (if the Mind can bear so shocking a Supposition) some poor Wretch, *exposed* on the Brow of this stupendous Promontory; without any Support for his Feet; and *cleaving* only to a weak slender Shrub, which but just adheres to the Crevices of the Rock. What tumultuous Throbings seize his Breast? What a dying Paleness invades his Cheeks? What Agonies of Fear rend his Heart? As He hangs, *projecting over* the ragged Precipice; and surveys the Ocean deep, wondrous deep below!—The Bough gives way. His only Hope fails. It yields more and more to his Weight. Good Heavens! *He sinks! He sinks!* O! for some friendly Hand, to snatch him from perishing! Millions, Millions of Gold, were the cheap Purchase of such a Mercy.

There was a Time, my Soul, when thou wast in a Situation, equally shall I say? Incomparably more dangerous. Tottering, not only on the *Verge of Life*, but on the very *Brink of Hell*. Often remember thy Peril. Often review the formidable Scene. Stand in silent Recollection, upon the Edges of the Precipice, to which Sicknes led thee;

* ————— *Rupes, & acuta Letho*
Saxo.

H O R.

thee ; on which Death pursued thee ; and from which both were confederated to cast thee head-long.—Look down into the yawning Gulph, and the bottomless Abyfs. See the infernal Prison, and the Sinners that are gone to their own Place. Hear their Weeping and Wailing, the Gnashing of their Teeth, and their inconsolable Anguish. Observe the Chains of Darknefs; the devouring Flame, and the everlasting Burnings. Couldst thou have dwelt in that Lake of Fire and Brimstone ? Couldst thou have taken up thy Abode amidst those hellish Fiends ? Couldst thou have lingered out eternal Ages, in that insupportable and inconceivable Woe ?—Bless then, adore and bless the compassionate Arm, which was stretched out, in the very Article of Need, to rescue Thee from this great, approaching, endless Perdition. Never, never forget that gracious Voice, which said—in Accents sweeter than the Music of the Seraphic Choir—“ Deliver him from going down “ into the Pit. Let his Health be restored, and “ his Day of Grace be prolonged.”

In some Places, the hideous Ruins not only *tower* to the Skies, but *lean* over the Strand. Prominent and frightfully pendulous, they nod Horror, and threaten Destruction on all below. A Person congratulates Himself, when he has got clear of the bending Precipice ; and can hardly forbear thinking, that the enormous Load is with-held by some unseen Hand, till the *execrable Wretch*, doomed to a most astonishing Vengeance, is come within Reach of the Blow. And truly, if he had the Strength of the Elephant, or the Firmness of the Behemoth, this

this must grind Him to Powder, or even crush Him into Atoms.

How awful to consider! That there is a Day coming, when wicked Potentates, and haughty Monarchs, will beg of yonder Seas, to *yawn* compassionately deep, and hide them in their darkest Abysses; hide them from the piercing Eye, and avenging Sword, of inflexible Justice.—That there is a Day coming, when the soft Voluptuary, the wanton Beauty, and all the Ungodly of the Earth, will beseech those tremendous Ridges, with their unsupportable Burden of Rocks, to *rush down* upon their guilty Heads *. If, by this means, they may be screened from the infinitely more dreaded Weight of divine Indignation.

Vain are their Cries; and vainer still would be their Refuge, should their passionate Requests be granted. Can Floods *conceal* the impious Wretches; when the Abysses of the Ocean shall be laid bare, and the Foundations of the World be discovered? When the Caverns of the Earth, and the Bottoms of the Mountains, shall be visible as the naked Plain?—Can Rocks *secrete* an obnoxious Rebel; when Rocks, with all their marble Quarries, and adamantine Entrails, shall dissolve like melting Wax? When Hills, that plunge their Roots to the Center, and lose their towering Heads in Air, shall start from their affrighted Base †, and flee

away

* Rev. iv. 15, 16.

† This brings to our Remembrance a most sublime Description of the Divine POWER, which arises in a beautiful Climax, and terminates in this grand Idea. *The Voice of the LORD is mighty in Operation, the Voice of the LORD is a glorious Voice. The Voice of the LORD*

breaketh

away like Chaff before the Wind!—Good GOD*!
What racking Anguish must they feel! What
inex-

breaketh the Cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon. He maketh them also to skip like a Calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young Unicorn. Psal. xxix. 4, 5, 6.

The Voice of the LORD is mighty in Operation. This is the general Proposition; which, in the following Sentences, We see most magnificently illustrated.—*The Voice of the LORD breaketh the Cedars*; when He speaks in Thunder, and bids the Lightening execute his Orders, the Trees, the Cedar-Trees, those sturdy Productions of the Earth, are shivered to pieces.—*Yea, the LORD breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon*; which, for Stateliness and Strength, surpass the Oaks of the Forest, surpass every Tree of the Field, almost as much as the Oak exceeds a Shrub.—It is a small Thing with JEHOVAH, to rend the Trunks, and tear up the Roots, of those massy Bodies; even *Lebanon and Sirion*, the incomparably greater Mountains on which they grow, *skip like a Calf*. They are thrown into strange Commotions. They are ready to spring from their Foundations. With all their Load of Woods and Rocks, they appear like some affrighted or some sportive Animal, that *starts with Horror, or leaps with Exultation*.

* *Good GOD!*—This Exclamation is introduced on a very serious Occasion, and used with an apparent Air of Reverence. Under which Circumstances, perhaps, it may *sometimes* be allowable, and not dishonourable to the Divine MAJESTY. But, when it is admitted into ordinary Conversation, on trifling Occurrences, and with a Levity of Temper; it is itself a very great Offence, and discovers a very irreligious Spirit.—It is *so great an Offence*, that the GOD of Heaven and Earth, declares Himself the Avenger of all such Transgressors. *He will not hold them guiltless*, or he will assuredly punish them. And if GOD condemn, who shall acquit? If HE will punish, who can deliver from his Hand?—It discovers a *very irreligious Spirit*; is a most dangerous Symptom; somewhat like a Plague-Spot on the Conversation. It shews, that there is no saving Health, no Life of GOD in the Soul. Was there any Sensibility in the Conscience,

inexpressibly severe Torment must they fear. Who can implore, ardently implore as a most desirable Favour, what Imagination itself shudders to conceive.

In some Places, these mountainous Declivities lift their Brow aloft; plant their Basis deep; and, instead of portending a Fall, defy the Fury of the most impetuous Elements. Firmly consolidated, and steadfastly established, they have withstood the united, the repeated Assaults of Winds and Waves, through a long Series of revolving Ages.—The sacred Writers, I observe, select almost all the striking Images, which the whole Creation affords, in order to communicate their heavenly Ideas, with the greatest Advantage. *Isaiah*, describing the Security of the Righteous, takes his Comparisons from the grand Spectacle before my Eyes. *He shall dwell on high: his Place of Defence shall be the Munitions of Rocks* *; inaccessible as those lofty Ridges, immoveable as their everlasting Foundations.

Should it be asked, what these Munitions of Rocks may signify?—I find two Places of Refuge and Safeguard, pointed out in Scripture; to either of which, I believe, the Metaphor is applicable.

He had Horns, says one of the divine Pindaries, *coming out of his Hand: there was the Hiding of his Power* †. Uncontrollable and omnipotent Power.

science, any Grace in the Heart, it would be impossible to treat so wantonly and so presumptuously, that glorious and fearful Name, *THE LORD THY GOD*. Deut. xxxiii. 58.

* *Isai. xxxiii. 16.*

† *Habak. iii. 4.* Horns were an Emblem of Strength. A Horn of Salvation, is put for a mighty and effectual Salvation.

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was lodged in the great JEHOVAH's Hand; and this was the sure Defence, this the impregnable Garrison, for all his People.—The Church of CHRIST is said to be in the Clefts of the Rock*: That spiritual Rock, of which the Israelites drank in the Wilderness; whose venerable and precious

VOL. III.

K

Clefts

Salvation. Luke ii. 69. *Thou hast heard me from among the Horns of the Unicorns*; Thou hast rescued me from the most potent and formidable Enemies. Psal. xxii. 21. Here the Word seems to denote that Power of JEHOVAH, to which nothing is impossible. And more than seems, if We consult the next Clause.—*There was the Hiding of his Power*; or, as it may be rendered, *his powerful Hiding*, a most secure Refuge, a Sanctuary absolutely inviolable. I have accommodated this Passage to a different Sense, *Meditat. Vol. I. p. 183.* But the true Signification, most suitable to the Context, and most subservient to the Prophet's Design, is, I apprehend, given by Theron. It is somewhat like an exalted Sentiment in the *Night-Thoughts*; which, with a small Alteration, may serve as a Paraphrase on the Text:

And Nature's Shield the Hollow of his Hand.

A Christian's Shield the Hollow of his Hand.

* Cant. ii. 14. Should the Reader have an Inclination to see this sacred, but mysterious Book explained, I would refer him to Dr. GILL's *Exposition of the Canticles*. Which has such a copious Vein of sanctified Invention running through it, and is interspersed with such a Variety of delicate and brilliant Images, as cannot but highly entertain a curious Mind. Which presents Us also with such rich and charming Displays of the Glory of CHRIST's Person, the Freeness of his Grace to Sinners, and the Tenderness of his Love to the Church, as cannot but administer the most refined Delight to the believing Soul.—Considered in both these Views, I think, the Work resembles the Paradisaical Garden, described by MILTON; in which.

Blossoms and Fruits at once of golden Hue

Appear'd, with gay-enamel'd Colours mix'd.

Clefts were opened, when the bloody Spear tore up the REDEEMER's Side, and cut a wide and deadly Passage to his Heart. Surely, *the Inhabitants of this Rock* have Reason to sing *. What should disquiet them? Who can destroy them? Why should not the Voice of Joy be in their Dwellings, and that Hymn of holy Triumph in their Mouths? *We have a strong City: Salvation hath GOD appointed, Salvation itself, for Walls and Bulwarks †.*—Happy should I think myself, if I was interested in this SAVIOUR, and established on this Rock.

Yonder, on the Summit of the most conspicuous Cliff, is erected a grand and stately Pile. At the Top, my Glass discovers a superb Lanthorn; at the Foot, are the Huts of Fishermen, surrounded with various Sorts of Nets.—It is, I suppose, a *Light-house*. Intended to apprise the Sailor, of his Danger; and shew Him, where the Shelves lurk, and where the Whirlpool boils. Or else to point out the Course He should steer; and conduct Him into a safe Road, and secure Harbour.

Both the Situation, and Design of the Building read me a Lesson: the one of awful Admonition, the other, of comfortable Instruction.—*Comfortable Instruction*. How massy and ponderous is the Edifice! Yet, there is not the least Reason to be apprehensive, of Failure or Insufficiency, in the Foundation. Was the Structure ten thousand times larger; was its Weight ten thousand times greater; the solid Rock would support it, with the utmost Ease, and the utmost Steadiness. Such is *CHRIST*; such are his Merits; such his glorious Righteousness, to those wise and blessed Souls,

who

* *Isai. xlii. 11.*

† *Isai. xxvi. 1.*

Oct. 9.

Theron to Aspasio.

147

who rest all the Weight of their eternal Interests on Him alone. *Such*, did I say? Much surer. For the Mountains may depart, and the Hills may be removed*; but this divine Basis can never sink, can never be shaken.—*Awful Admonition*. For, it recalls to my Memory that alarming, yet welcome Text †, which You styled the spiritual Light-house. Which has been as serviceable, to my distressed Mind, and bewildered Thoughts; as such an illuminated Watch-tower, to the wandering and benighted Mariner. May I often view it! Ever attend to its faithful Direction! And be withheld, by its Interposition, from that devouring Gulph, and that destructive Shoal, Dependence on Self-righteousness. Be led, by its Influence, into the Haven—the fair and happy Haven of *Salvation and Grace*.

Now I have mentioned *Havens*, I cannot but admire the State and Disposition of the Shore. I see, even in its rude and shapeless Form, a most pleasing Display of Divine Good-will to Men.—In arranging this vast Assemblage of Earth and Water, the ALMIGHTY Disposer has kept a continual Eye upon our Benefit. Were the Shores strait, like the Walls of our Garden; or smooth, like some polished Globe; they might seem more orderly and graceful. But how detrimental such a Piece of Delicacy, to Navigation, to Commerce, and the Prosperity of human Affairs! Our Ships, in stormy Weather, would be like straggling Parties of vanquished and flying Troops; pursued by an enraged Enemy, and shut out from every Fortress, every Place of Refuge.

K 2

This

* Isai. liv. 10. † See Rom. ix. 30, 31, 32. and Vol. II. Letter V.

This GOD's infinite Wisdom foresaw, and his infinite Goodness determined to prevent. For which Purpose, He made the Boundaries of the great Deep, not even and shapely, but most advantageously ragged and irregular. — Here, the Earth is scooped and excavated, for many Miles; as if it had been bored, by some prodigiously large Auger. — There it sinks, and turns, and winds, somewhat like the Wards of a Lock; giving easy Admission to our Ships and Fleets, but barring the Access of furious and destructive Surges. — Yonder, two huge Promontories, horrible to behold, advance, as it were with haughty Strides, into the Deep. They frown over the Abyss; but look, with the most smiling Aspect, on the Weather-beaten Bark. Amidst the Arms of these frightful, but friendly Cliffs, the Sailor and his Vessel find Shelter, Repose, and Safety. — In one or other of these various Harbours, they drop their Fear, as they drop their Anchor; and defy the Rage of Tempests, and care not for all the Madness of the Ocean.

How many Thousands and Millions of Lives, has this kind provisional Safeguard, rescued from Destruction! Without these most commodious Receptacles the Sea would be covered with Wrecks; and the Waves be little better, than a Grave for the Mariners. But, putting into some hospitable Port, they are beyond the Reach of Danger. Though howling Winds rend the Sky, and fiercest Hurricanes toss the Sea, they abide in perfect Security. Thus they abide, till the Storm is hushed; till the Billows subside; and a Calm takes place.

Such, methinks, is the State, the happy State of the Righteous. Who can say, with Faith and

in Truth, *The eternal GOD is our Refuge.* What Haven can be so safe, as his omnipotent Protection? As the Arm of his Power, and the Wings of his Providence? In the midst of Perils, their Persons are secure. Surrounded by Enemies, their Persons are undismayed. Even when it shall hail, coming down on the Forest; and the City shall be low in a low Place, thy People, O LORD, shall dwell in a peaceable Habitation, and in sure Dwellings, and in quiet Resting-places.*

Let *Isa. xxxii. 18, 19.* Upon this Text, I beg Leave to make a short Paraphrase, and add a critical Remark. My People, says GOD, shall dwell in a peaceable Habitation, and in sure Dwellings, and in quiet Resting-places. Abiding in CHRIST; cleaving to his great Atonement; and always beholding themselves complete, in his everlasting Righteousness; they shall "pass their Time in Rest and Quietness." Having Peace with GOD; Tranquility in their Conscience; and Security from their spiritual Enemies.

This Tranquility, perhaps, is to be enjoyed only in halcyon Days; when Peace and Repose are common Blessings.—No, but in Times of Confusion and Disorder; when Danger spreads Alarm, and Ruin scatters Havock, all around. *When it shall hail with a destructive Hail upon the Forest, and the City shall be utterly demolished.* When GOD's Judgment, like an impetuous, irresistible, destroying Hail, shall beat down Forests, though the Growth of Ages; shall overthrow Kingdoms, whose Inhabitants are numerous as the Trees of the Wood; and lay mighty Cities even with the Ground.

A most beautiful Contrast, between the Security of JEHOVAH's People, and the Destruction of his Enemies. Which Contrast is, like all *Isaiah's* Images, painted in the most lively Colours; but much obscured, by the Masoretic Punctuation, and the English Version. *It shall hail, coming down on the Forest.* How unnecessary and jejune is the Circumstance of coming down, when connected with *it shall hail!* Can We suppose the latter

Let me but once again survey those rude but majestic Elevations, those wild but noble Deformities; the Cliffs.—*Fortifications*, reared by an Almighty Hand, to protect us at once from warring Elements, and invading Enemies.—*Ramparts*, which overlook and command the Ocean; and viewed by distant Mariners, seem to touch or prop the Sky. Which have surrounded our Isle ever since the universal Deluge, and will be her never failing Defence even to the general Conflagration.—If some opinionated Engineer should take it into his Head, to suspect the Stability of these unshaken Bulwarks: if He should make Proposals for strengthening them with Buttresses, or girding them round with Cramping-Irons! How would his Project be received? With Approbation and Applause? Or with the Sneer of Contempt,

to exist, without the former? Or does the Consideration of the former, add either Force or Beauty to the latter? Whereas, read the Words without the Points, or let them be pointed in the following Manner, *וְהָיָה כְּרִדָּה*, and

we are presented with a very significant and forcible *Hebraism*. *Grandinando grandinabit; Hailing it shall hail*. It shall hail with great Violence and Impetuosity, that bears down every Thing. Destroying alike Forests and Cities: Laying both the stately Trees, and superb Edifices, in Ruin.

I would not therefore translate *וְהָיָה כְּרִדָּה* *The City shall be low in a low Place*. The low Place, in this Connection, seems to be quite *unpoetical*, ungraceful and insignificant. If a City is demolished, it matters very little, or not at all, whether the Work of Fate be executed, in a high or low Place. Whereas, the Circumstance, which the sacred Original describes, is truly important and awful. The Words may be translated *Dejiciendo deficitur*; or, *In Planitiem humiabitur*. *It shall be utterly overthrown, or made flat as a Plain*. The whole City, with all its Buildings, whether mean or magnificent, shall be broken down; laid low as the Dust; low as Lowness itself.

Contempt, and the Hiss of Indignation? "Fool that He is! To think of enlarging or corroborating these magnificent and everlasting Works of Nature, by the puny Piddlings of Art!"—Such, so foolish and preposterous, is that once favourite Conceit, of adding my own Performances, in order to increase the justifying Efficacy of **CHRIST**'s Obedience. What a Disparagement this to the great the divine Foundation! Which, for the Support of burdened, and the Security of endangered Sinners, is *sufficient*—is *self-sufficient*—is *all-sufficient*.

Hark! Whence is that shrill Noise? It is what *Milton* calls, *the Sea-Mew's Clang*. I look round and find her by her Voice. How she plays on the Breeze, and sports on the Surge! Free as the first, unconfined as the last. Sometimes I see her sweeping the lofty Cliffs, or skimming the level Deep. Sometimes I behold her springing into the Air, and soaring far above the Summit of the Admiral's Mast. Anon she shoots as low into the Heart of the Ocean, loses our Sight, and seems lost to the World. On a sudden, the feathery Diver emerges; shakes the Brine from her Wings; rises on those strong Pinions; and, with a triumphant Scream, flits along the Shores, or sails through the Skies.

How wonderfully has **PROVIDENCE** fitted this and some other Animals, to sojourn in either Element? Be they in the moist or dry, in the dense or rare, in the buoyant Atmosphere or the overwhelming Flood, it is all alike to them. They are Citizens of either Region; and are presented, if I may so speak, with the Freedom both of Sea and Land.—Is not this a significant Emblem of that

happy Temper described by St. Paul, and exemplified in his Conduct. *I have learned, in whatever State I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Every where, and in all Things, I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer Need.*

Now We behold Him in Prosperity. He rides up on the high Places of the Earth, with Sun-shine all around Him. He is received as *CHRIST JESUS*, and respected as an Angel of *GOD*. People are willing to pluck out their own Eyes, and give them to him. — Ere long the Scene shifts, and We behold Him in Adversity. He is smitten into the Place of Dragons, and covered with the Shadow of Death. His own familiar Friends forsake Him. His Enemies come about Him like exasperated Bees. And the general Cry is, *Away with him, and let him fall from the Earth.* — Yet what Equanimity is preserved amidst these startling Reolutions! Like the *Caspian Sea*, which neither ebbs nor flows, He is still the same: the same humble, zealous, heavenly-minded Christian. Unchanged by Vicissitude, He stoops with Dignity, nor ascends with Ease. Alacrity in His Business, and Complacency in his Condition, are His inseparable Attendants. *In all Things approving Himself the Minister of GOD*, and the Friend of Man. — But let us hear his own Words. They are infinitely beautiful. I never read, in any Author, a greater Sublimity of Sentiment; and I never observed, in any Description, a more genuine Magnificence of Spirit.

• Phil. iv. 11, 12.

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As amphibious Animals live and move, either in Air or Water; so, says the Apostle, We pass unhurt and unaffected, through Honour and Dishonour, through evil Report and good Report. As Devils, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all Things. What a noble Superiority to all external Circumstances! This is Liberty indeed. He is more than Conqueror over every Wrong and over all Tribulation. This is the exalted Character of the truly great Man. How changeable is the Face of this liquid Element! Not long ago, there was nothing, from this stony Boundary, to the Horizon's utmost Verge, but the wildest Tumult and most horrible Confusion. Now, the stormy Flood has smoothed its rugged Brow, and the watery Upore is lulled into a profound Tranquillity. Where rolling Mountains rushed and raged, threatening to dash the Clouds, and deluge the Earth; where the gentlest Undulations play, and only just wrinkle the Surface of the mighty Balon. Where the dreadful Abyss opened its wide and unfathomable Jaws, to swallow up the trembling Saffor, and his shattered Vessel; there a calm and clear Expanse diffuses its ample Bosom, alluring the Fish to bask in the Sun, and inviting the Sea-fowl to watch for their Prey. In this fair floating Mirror, I see the Picture of every Cloud, which passes through the Regions of the Sky. But in its uncertain and treacherous Temperature,

perature, I see more plainly the inconstant and ever-variable Condition of human Affairs.—Yonder go the Ships: Some associated, like Constellations in the Expanse of Heaven: Some solitary, like Planets on the ethereal Road. Two or three are perfectly distinguishable. Their Sails are all expanded. They swell to the Breeze, and catch the rambling Gales. Their Keel ploughs the Wave, and their Hull shares the level Deep. The Mariners, delighted with these peaceful Seas, and this serene, soothing State of Things, have, perhaps, no Apprehensions of Danger. They think not of the irresistible Storms, which may gather around them; nor of the shipwrecked Dead, that lie buried beneath them. I wish them a prosperous Voyage. Yet, sincerely as I wish it, I durst not undertake to ensure it. Soon may Clouds darken the Scene, and Lightenings glare amidst the Gloom. Soon may the Winds howl, and the Tempest rave. Nor Man, nor Angel, can ascertain the Continuance of this hazy Weather, so much as a single Day, or even to the next Hour.—And let me not fondly promise myself an *uninterrupted* Tenor of Serenity in my Mind, or of Prosperity in my Circumstances. Sometimes, indeed, my Heart exults under the Smile of Heaven, and the Favour of GOD. But soon; ah! too soon I am clouded with Fear, and oppressed with Corruption. I sigh out that passionate Acknowledgment, *Wretched Man that I am!* And add that wishful Inquiry, *Who shall deliver me?*—For this disordered State of Things, the afflicted Patriarch's Complaint, is the most apposite Motto, and the most wholesome Memento, *Changes and War are*

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around me*. —But there is a World, where disastrous
Revolutions will be known no more. Where our
Enjoyments will no longer fluctuate like the Ocean,
but be more steadfast than the Rocks, and more im-
moveable than the Shores.

In this World, We are never secure. Calamity
comes, like a Thief in the Night; at a Time, when
We are not aware; and from a Quarter, which We
did not suspect. Out of such a composed Sea, which
is the very Image of Tranquility, sometimes De-
struction rises. And rises in its most dreadful Form.

—A prodigious Detachment of Water issues from
the Deep; and, by some unknown but wondrous
Force, advances into the upper Regions. It spreads
amidst the Clouds, or becomes itself a black and
horrid Cloud. The Sea boils, as the whirling Co-
lumn ascends; and the Air roars, as it receives the
unusual Weight. Laden with Ruin, and big with
Death, the tremendous Meteor hovers. It hovers,
for a while on the groaning Atmosphere; as tho'
it was singling out its Prey, or taking the surest
Aim. Then bursts—in a Moment bursts, and with
irresistible Impetuosity falls. The Rock, torn from
the Summit of a Mountain, and thundering down
the Cliffs, plunges not into the foaming Brine,
with Half the Fury or Half the Noise. The very
Ocean is startled at the Shock †.—But if a Ship,

Job x. 17.

† We have a very remarkable and terrible Account of
a Water-Spout, recorded in the *Philosophical Transactions*.
—"A Spout (Anno 1718) breaking on Emott-Moor,
near Coln, in Lancashire, the Country was immedi-
ately overflown; a Brook, in a few Minutes, rose six
Feet perpendicularly high; the Ground, whereon the
Spout

an unfortunate Ship, happens to be within the Reach of this precipitated Deluge; alas! no Strength of Timber can sustain, no Art of Sailors can elude the Blow. All is lost, irrecoverably lost. The Vessel is dashed into Shivers, or sinks like Lead in the mighty Waters. — So, only ten thousand Times deeper, must sinful Man have sunk; or sunk, under the Wrath of GOD and the Curse of the Law, had not our gracious REDEEMER bore the Burden of both, in his own Body on the Tree.

Here, I see an immense Collection of Waters, in a State of deep Repose. Could I extend my View to some remoter Tracts, I should behold every Thing smoother and calmer still. It frequently happens, on the eastern Coasts of Africa, that not a Ridge swells, nor a Furrow sinks, the Surface of the Ocean is all like a glassy Plain. The Waves are asleep. Not a Gate stirs. Even the downy Feather, hung on the Cordage, is motionless. The Sea stagnates. The Mariner is becalmed, and his Vessel reels, but scarcely creeps. — Whereas, could I survey the Straits of Magellan, or the Gut of Gibraltar, I should find a very striking Difference. There, the Waters pour in with Vehemence, and rush forwards with Impetuosity. All is there in strong Agitation, and rapid Progress. The Ship is whirled through the narrow Passage, and rides, as it were, on the Wheels of the Surge, or on the Wings of the Wind.

— Spout fell, which was sixty Feet over, was tore up to the very Rock, which was no less than seven Feet deep, and a deep Gulph made for above half a Mile, the Earth being raised on either Side in great Heaps. — What were the stoutest Ship beneath such a Load of falling Waters? Like an Egg-shell under the Weight of a Pyramid.

Wind.—This, my dear *Aspasio*, is a true Image of what I have been, and of what I am. Some Months ago, when I was insensible of Guilt, all my Prayers were listless, and all my Religion was a Kind of spiritual Lethargy. I felt not in my Heart what I uttered with my Tongue. *Hosannahs* were but an empty Ceremony, and Confessions froze on my formal Lips.—But, since the SPIRIT of GOD has awakened me from my Dream, and convinced me of my Sinfulness, I can no longer be satisfied with indolent and yawning Devotions. Trials and Temptations put strong Cries into my Mouth. My Soul mourns before the LORD: my Desires plead with the Blessed GOD: and I am ready to say, as the Patriarch of old, “I cannot, I must not, I will not let Thee go, unless Thou bless me.”

I see no Flocks of Sheep, with sober Assiduity, nibbling the grassy Plains. No Lambs, with innocent Gaiety, and in little Parties of Pleasure, frisking along the sunny Banks. Here are no Stables for the generous Steed, nor Pastures for the lusty Heifer. I Nevertheless, these watery Regions are stocked with Colonies of proper and peculiar Inhabitants.

Inhabitants! Is such a Thing possible? Can any Creature live in this suffocating Element? Can they move and act, propagate their Species, and continue from Generation to Generation; where *We*, immersed but a few Minutes, inevitably perish?—

’Tis wonderful indeed! What *We* could not have believed, had *We* not seen with our Eyes, or known by sure Experience. The Existence, and History of Fishes, without the Comment of Experience.

perfection; would have seemed a philosophical Romance; something to Imagination amusing, but in Reality impossible.—Yet, through the Almighty Power of our GOD, not only *living Creatures*, but the greatest of *living Creatures*, are formed from *under the Waters**. In Number countless, and in Bulk matchless. Yea, and have their Being, Life, and Health, in what We reckon the Seat of Suffocation and Death.

They are all clothed and accoutred, in exact Conformity to the Climate. Not in swelling Wool, or buoyant Feathers; not in a flowing Robe, or a full-trimmed Suit; but with as much Compactness, and with as little Superfluity, as possible. They are clad, or rather *sheathed* in Scales. Which adhere closely to their Bodies, and are always laid in a Kind of natural Oil. Than which Apparel nothing can be more *light*; at the same Time nothing more *solid*, and nothing so *smooth*. It hinders the Fluid from penetrating their Flesh; it prevents the

Cold

* Job xxvi. 5. It is said in our Translation, *Dead Things are formed from under the Waters*. But, I think it is said very improperly. The Word is קַדְמִי. Which signifies *Gigantes, Giants*; vast Creatures; of prodigious Size: in their enormous Bulk, exceeding the Animals produced on the dry Land, as much as the Children of *Anak*, or *Goliath* of *Gath*, exceeded in Stature the ordinary Sons of Men.

This seems to be the Sense of the Passage. And it is a Sense extremely proper; as it expresses a grand Peculiarity, distinguishing the aquatic Animals. A Peculiarity, on which it was both obvious and judicious, for the sacred Writer to touch; and which, I believe, first strikes our Attention, whenever We contemplate the Natives of the Deep. There is that *Leviathan*, of most stupendous Magnitude, was the first great Observable in the Psalmist's Survey.

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Cold from coagulating their Blood; and enables them to make their Way through the Waters with the utmost Facility. If, in their rapid Progress, they strike against any hard Substance, this their scaly Doublet breaks the Force of the Blow; and effectually secures them, from Casualties, at least from Harm.

Their *Shape* is slender and tapering; fitted to divide the Waters, and to traverse, with the least Obstruction, a very resisting Medium.—Their *Tail* is extremely flexible. It consists of vigorous Muscles, and acts with uncommon Agility. By its alternate Impulse, it causes a progressive Motion; and by repeated Strokes, it darts the whole Body to any Distance.—They have each a curious *Instrument**, by which they increase or diminish their specific Gravity; sink like Lead, or float like a Cork; rise to what Height, or descend to what Depth, they please.—Where-ever I turn my View, I perceive a *Wisdom*, perpetually fruitful of new Designs; a *Power*, completely executing whatever is projected; a *Goodness*, still, still communicating Comfort and Happiness—communicating them, in various, unsuspected, innumerable Ways—Nay, communicating them, both by what is withheld, and by what is imported! As these Creatures have, probably, no Occasion for the Sense of *Hearing*; as the Impressions of Sound have very little, if any, Existence in their Habitation; to have given them the usual Furniture of Ears, would have been an Incumbrance, rather than a Benefit.

This is the Abode of *Leviathan*, hugest of living Creatures. Before whom the broad-limbed Elephant,

* The Air Bladder.

phant, and the tall-necked Camel, are mere Shrimps, A stretched-out Promontory, when He sleeps; a moving Island, when He swims; "making the Sea "to boil like a Pot;" when, unweildily wallowing, He takes his prodigious Pastime.—Here, the voracious *Shark*, that Assassin of the finny Nations, roams and commits his Ravages: imbrues his horrid Fangs, and marks his rapid Path, with Blood.—Here dwelt that *great*, and greatly surprising *Fish*, whose Fierceness and Avidity the Almighty SOVEREIGN employed as his Pursuivant, to arrest a fugitive Prophet. Whose ample Jaws, or capacious Entrails, were the Dungeon to confine a rebellious Subject, and the Cabin to lodge a penitent Offender. Whose Bulk and Strength and Speed were a kind of Vessel, transporting this Convict to the Bottom of the Mountains, and the Bars of the Earth*. After the Criminal was sufficiently chastised, and properly humbled, they served as a Galley with Oars, to convey Him safe to Land.

In the same Element resides, (at least takes up Part of his Residence) that formidable Monster, who is made without Fear, and *has not his Like upon Earth*. He esteemeth the pointed Iron as Straw, and ponderous Brass as rotten Wood. His Heart is as hard as a Piece of nether Millstone, and his Scales are a Coat of impenetrable Mail. Strength not to be resisted, much less to be subdued, lies intrenched in his sinewy Neck. His Eyes are like the Eyelids of the opening Day; and when He rolls those glaring Orbs, there seems to be another Morn risen on Mid-noon. His Teeth are terrible, jagged for Rapine, and edged with Death.

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* Jonah ii. 5.

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His Throat is as a burning Furnace; Clouds of Smoke are poured from his Nostrils, and Flakes of Fire issue from his Mouth. None, no not the most resolute, dares provoke Him to the Combat, or even stir him up from his Slumbers. He laugheth at the shaking of the Spear, and Sorrow marcheth in Triumph before Him *. Whenever He raiseth Himself, the Mighty are afraid; where-ever He advanceth, Ruin is there.—If a mere Creature is capable of spreading such Alarm and Dread; how greatly is the CREATOR himself, to be feared! Who can turn the most harmless Inhabitant of the Ocean, into a ravenous Alligator, or a horrid Crocodile! Who can arm every Reptile of the Ground, with all the Force and Rage of a Lion!

'Tis impossible to enter on the Muster-roll, those scaly Herds, and that minuter Fry, which graze the Sea-weed, or stray through the coral Groves. They are innumerable, as the Sands which lie under them; countless, as the Waves which cover them.—Here

Vol. III.

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* Job xli. 22. לפני תרוץ דמור Meror, says Bochart, *præcedit tanquam Metator & Comes, tumidique Antecambulo Regis*. Terror and Anguish are a kind of advanced Guard to this Monarch among the Reptiles. Or they go before the Monster, as the Man bearing a Shield went before the Philistine Giant.—The original Word occurs in no other Part of the divine Book. I cannot recollect any Expression, which so fully represents its Meaning, as *Homer's* *αὐγαστάριον*, or *Xenophon's* *γαυγαστάριον*; both which are intended to describe the Ardour and Action of a high-mettled prancing Steed.—The whole Paragraph is a Sketch of the Crocodile's Picture. It exhibits a few Circumstances, culled from that inimitable Description, extant in the Book of Job. Which are given, either in the sacred Writer's own Words, or else in a paraphrastic Explanation of their Sense.

are uncouth Animals, of monstrous Shapes*, and amazing Qualities†. Some, that have been disco-

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* *Monstrous Shapes*—Such as the *Sword-fish*; whose upper Jaw is lengthened into a strong and sharp Sword. With which He sometimes ventures to attack the Ships, though armed with Thunder; and is capable of piercing their Sides, though ribbed with Oak. This may be called the *Champion* of the Waters. Who, though never exceeding sixteen Feet in Length, yet confiding in a Weapon at once so trusty and so tremendous, scruples not to give Battle even to the Whale Himself.—The *Sun-fish* has no Tail; seems to be all Head; and was it not for two Fins, which act the Part of Oars, would be one intire round Mass of Flesh.—The *Polypus*, remarkable for its numerous Feet, and as many Claws; by which it has the Appearance of a mere Insect, and seems fitted only to crawl. At the same Time, an Excrecence arising on the Back, enables it to steer and pursue a steady Course in the Waves. So that it may pass under the two-fold Character of a *Sailor* and a *Reptile*.

† *Amazing Qualities*—Among these may be reckoned the *Torpedo*, which benumbs on a sudden, and renders impotent, whatever Fish it assaults. And, which is yet more extraordinary, strikes even the Fisherman's Arm, when He offers to lay hold on it, with a temporary Deadness. By this means, it possesses the double Advantage, of arresting its Prey, and securing itself.—The *Cuttle-fish*, furnished with a liquid Magazine, of a Colour and Consistence like Ink. Which, when pursued by an Enemy, the Creature emits, and blackens the Water. By this Artifice, the Foe is bewildered in the Chace; and while the One vainly gropes in the Dark, the Other seizes the Opportunity, and makes his Escape.—The *Nautilus*, whose Shell forms a natural Boat. The dextrous Inhabitant unfurls a Membrane to the Wind, which serves him instead of a Sail. He extends also a Couple of Arms, with which, as with two slender Oars, He rows Himself along. When he is disposed to retire or to act the Recluse, He strikes Sail; and, without any Apprehension of being drowned, sinks to the Bottom. When the Weather is calm, and He has an Inclination to see

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covered by the inquisitive Eye of Man; and many more, that remain among the Secrets of the hoary Deep.—Here are Sholes and Sholes, of various Characters, and of the most diversified Sizes; from the *gigantic* Whale, whose Flouncings “tempest the Ocean,” to the *evanescent* Anchovy, whose Substance dissolves in the smallest Fircafee.—Some, lodged in their pearly Shells, and fastening on their rocky Beds, seem attentive to no higher Employ, than that of imbibing moist Nutrient. These, but a small Remove from vegetable Life, are almost rooted to the Rocks, on which they lie reposed. While others, active as the winged Creation, and swift as an Arrow from the *Indian* Bow, shoot along the yielding Flood, and range at large the spacious Regions of the Deep.

L. 2. Here

the World, or take his Pleasure, He mounts to the Surface; and, self-taught in the Art of Navigation, performs his Voyage without either Chart or Compass: is Himself the *Vessel*, the *Rigging*, and the *Pilot*.—The *Polypus*, mentioned in the preceding Note, whose Method of producing its Young, is very singular, and very wonderful. The young One issues from the Side of its Parent, in the Form of a small Pimple. Which, lengthening and enlarging continually, becomes, in the Space of two Days, a perfect Animal; and drops from its Parent, to shift for itself. If this be wonderful, the Power of reproducing and multiplying itself, by that very Circumstance which destroys other Creatures, is incomparably more so. We are assured, from undoubted Authority, that this Insect, when cut into a Number of separate Pieces, becomes so many distinct and separate Insects. Each Piece forming itself into a Head, a Tail, and all the other Organs, which are necessary for the Existence and Preservation of animal Life. A Property this, absolutely unaccountable! A Process of Operation, tho’ in Reality *natural*, yet to our Apprehension *miraculous*!

Here is the *Tortoise*, who never moves but under her own portable Pent-house. The *Lobster*, which, whether She sleeps or wakes, is still in a State of Defence, and clad in jointed Armour. The *Oyster*, a sort of living Jelly, ingarrisoned in a Bulwark of native Stone. With many other Kinds of Sea Reptiles, or as the Psalmist speaks, *Things creeping innumerable*.—I am surpris'd at the Variety of their Figure, and charmed with the Splendor of their Colours. Unsearchable is the Wisdom, and endless the Contrivance, of the All-creating GOD!—Some are rugged in their Form; clumsy in their Gait; and little better than hideous in their Aspect. Their Shells seem to be the Production of a disorderly Jumble, rather than the Effects of Skill and Design. Yet We shall find, even in these seeming Irregularities, the *nicest* Dispositions. These Abodes, uncouth as they may appear, are adapted to the Genius of their respective Tenants; are exactly suited to their particular Exigencies. Neither the *Ionic* Delicacy, nor the *Corinthian* Richness, nor any other Order of Architecture, would have served their Purposes half so well, as this coarse and homely Fabric.

Some on the other Hand, are extremely neat. Their Structure is all Symmetry and Elegance. No Enamel in the World is comparable to their Polish. There is not a *Room of State*, in all the Palaces of *Europe*, so brilliantly adorned, as the Dining-room and the Bed-chamber of the little Fish, that dwells in *Mother of Pearl*. Such a lovely Mixture of Red, and Blue, and Green, so delightfully staining the most clear and glistening Ground, is no where else to be seen. The royal Power may covet it, and hu-

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man Art may mimic it; but neither the one, nor the other, nor both united; will ever be able to equal it.

But what I admire more, than all their Streaks and their Spots, more than all their regular, or romantic Shapes, is, The extraordinary Provision made for their *Safety*.—Nothing is more relishing and palatable than their *Flesh*. Nothing more heavy and sluggish than their *Motions*. As they have no *Speed* to escape, neither have they any *Dexterity* to elude the *Foe*. Were they naked or unguarded, they must be an easy *Prey* to every *Free-booter*, that roams the *Ocean*.—To prevent this fatal *Consequence*, what is only *Clothing* to other *Animals*, is to them a *Clothing*, a *House*, and a *Castle*. They have a *Fortification*, that grows with their *Growth*, and is a *Part* of themselves. By this means, they live secure amidst *Millions* and *Millions* of ravenous *Jaws*. By this means, they are *imparked*, as it were, in their own *Shell*; and, screened from every other *Assault*, are reserved for the *Use* and *Pleasure* of *Mankind*.

This is the *Birth-place* of *Cod*, the standing *Repast* of *Lent*. This is the *Nursery* of *Turbot*, for its exquisite *Relish* justly styled, The *Pheasant* of the *Waters*. Hence comes the *Sturgeon*, delicious even in *Pickle*, and a *Regale* for royal *Luxury*: Hence the *Flounder*, dappled with reddish Spots*, and

* Here is the *Appearance* of a *Mistake*: Not the *Flounder*, I apprehend, but the *Plaice*, is dappled with reddish Spots: Yet so very trivial is the *Mistake*, that to remark it might be deemed a *Piece* of refined *Impertinence*, did I not make some *Amends* by the following *Observation*: With which, I dare promise myself, the *Reader* will not be displeased. Especially, as it exhibits

and a Supply for vulgar Wants.—Here dwell the *Mackarel*, decked, when haled from their native Element, richly decked with the most glossy Dies: the *Herrings*, whose Back is mottled with Azure, and his Belly sleek with Silver: the *Salmon*, in plainer Habit, but of larger Substance, and higher Esteem, than either or both the preceding.—These, when shotten and lean, wander wildly up and down the vast Abyss. When *plump*, and *delicate*, they throng our Creeks, and swarm in our Bays: they repair to the Shallows, or haunt the running Streams.—

Who a very signal Instance of GOD Almighty's indulgent Goodness even to the meanest of his Creation, and alters the general Method of his Proceeding; whenever it is requisite, for the Benefit or the Comfort of any Animal.

The Flounder, the Plaice, the Sole, and almost all the flat Fish, are white on the under Side, while their upper Side is tinged with darkish Brown. By this Variation, they are not only rendered curious and beautiful, but on that Part which presents itself to the Spectator, they resemble the Colour of Mud. If You ask what is the Importance, what the Advantage, of such a Resemblance? Great. For, as the Creatures generally hover or float about the Mud, they are, by this Means, more easily concealed, and more frequently escape their Enemies.

What is still more remarkable; Providence, which has given to other Fishes an Eye on each Side of the Head, has, in this Species, placed both the Eyes on the same Side. Most nicely is this peculiar Regulation suited to the Peculiarity of their Condition. They swim but little, and always with their white Side downwards. Here therefore the Power of Seeing would scarcely be of any Service. Whereas, on the opposite Part of their Body, they have need of the quickest Sight, for their continual Preservation.—Admirable Disposition! Where nothing is to be feared, the usual Guard is withdrawn. Where Danger threatens, there the Guard is not only placed, but doubled!

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Who bids these Creatures evacuate the Shores, and disperse themselves into all Quarters, when they become worthless and unfit for our Service? Who rallies and recalls the undisciplined Vagrants, as soon as they are improved into desirable Food? Who appoints the very Scene of our Ambushes, to be the Place of their Rendezvous? So that they come like Volunteers to our Nets?—Surely, the Furlow is signed, the Summons issued, and the Point of Reunion settled, by a Providence ever indulgent to Mankind; ever studious to treat Us with Dainties, and load Us with Benefits*.

We have wondered at † our SAVIOUR's Penetration and Power—his *Penetration*, which, though the Sea was at a Distance, and Walls intervened, discerned the Fish, that had just swallowed a Piece of Money—his *Power*, which, without any Delay ‡, brought the lawless Rambler, charged with the silver Spoil, to *Peter's* Hook. But is it not equally wonderful, to observe such innumerable Multitudes of finny Visitants, annually heaving our Friths, and crouding upon our Shores? Making this welcome Approach, at the most proper Periods of the Year, and in an orderly Succession of one Species to another. All which furnish our Tables with a wholesome and delicate *Repast*; at the same Time, that they yield to our Nation a *Revenue* ||, more certain, and no less considerable, than the Mines of *Peru*.

L. 4.

These

* Psal. lxxviii. 19.

† See Letter VIII. 96.

‡ Without any Delay—For the Directions to *Peter* are, Take the Fish that first cometh up.

|| We are told, That the Banks of *Newfoundland* alone, bring in to the Proprietors of that Fishery, a Revenue of several Millions every Year.—And they will, in all Probability, be an unimpaired Resource of Treasure, when the richest Mines now worked in the World, are choked up or exhausted.

These approach, while these of enormous Size and tremendous Appearance abandon the Shores. The latter might indanger the Fisherman's Safety, and would certainly scare away the valuable Fish from our Coasts. They are therefore restrained by an invisible Hand, and abscond in the Abysses of the Ocean. Just as the wild Beasts of the Earth, impelled by the same over-ruling Power, hide themselves in the Recesses of the Forest.—A Ship, infected with a pestilential Distemper, is obliged to keep off at Sea; and not permitted to enter the Port, till she has performed her *Quarantine*. In like manner, these Monsters of the Deep, whose very Business is Destruction, are laid under a providential Interdict. Only with this desirable Difference, that, as their Presence would always be pernicious, they are never suffered to come near. Their *Quarantine* is perpetual.

Ask now the Beasts, and they shall teach Thee; and the Fowls of the Air, and they shall tell Thee: or speak to the Earth, and it shall teach Thee; and the Fishes of the Sea shall declare unto Thee—That the LORD is gracious—That his tender Mercies are over all his Works—That to Us He is superabundantly and profusely good. Having ordered all Things in the Surges of the Ocean, as well as on the Surface of the Ground, for our rich Accommodation, and for our greatest Advantage.*

One Circumstance, relating to the Natives of the Deep, is very peculiar, and no less astonishing.

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* *Job xii. 7, 8. The Earth is represented, as bearing witness to the immense Benignity of the blessed GOD. Some Minutes, or a short Abstract, of her Testimony on this Occasion, may be seen in Letter VI.*

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As they neither sow, nor reap; have neither the Produce of the Hedges, nor the Gleanings of the Field; they are obliged to plunder and devour one another, for necessary Subsistence. They are a kind of licensed Banditti; that make Violence and Murder their professed Trade.—By this means, prodigious Devastations ensue; and, without proper, without very extraordinary Recruits, the whole Race must continually dwindle, and at length be totally extinct.—Were they to bring forth, like the most prolific of our terrestrial Animals, a Dozen only, or a Score at each Birth; the Increase would be unspeakably too small for the Consumption. The weaker Species would be destroyed by the stronger; and, in Time, the stronger must perish, even by their successful Endeavours to maintain themselves.—Therefore, to supply Millions of Assassins with their Prey, and Millions of Tables with their Food, yet not to depopulate the watery Realms; the Issue produced by every Breeder is almost incredible. They spawn, not by Scores or Hundreds, but by Thousands and by Millions †. A single Mother is pregnant with a Nation. By which

* To this, I believe, the Prophet alludes, in that remarkable Expression; *Thou makest Men as the Fishes of the Sea.* Thou sufferest Men to commit, without Restraint or Controul, all Manner of Outrages. What should be a civil Community, is a Scene of Oppression. The Weakest are a Prey to the Strongest, and every One seeks the Destruction of his Neighbour. *Habak. i. 14.*

† Mr. Petit found 342,144 Eggs in the hard Roe of a Carp, sixteen Inches long. Mr. *Lewenboeck* counted, in a Cod of an ordinary Size, 9,384,000 Eggs.—A Fecundity perfectly amazing! But admirably adapted to the pressing Exigencies of the watery World; admirably contrived

which amazing, but most needful Expedient, a periodical Reparation is made, proportionable to the immense Havock.

How welcome this Reparation is, and how very serviceable, let those forlorn People acknowledge, who dwell under the northern Pole. Their Wants are few, and their Desires moderate. Yet moderate as their Desires are, they receive no Supply from the Orchard or the Furrow. Instead of Acres waving with yellow Grain, or Trees bending with ruddy Fruit, their Fields are frozen to Iron, and buried under Mountains of Snow. — Since the Earth denies them her usual Succours, the Sea takes them under her parental Care. Even the wild tempestuous Ocean, seems to pity those poor Outcasts; and opens to them her Hand, or (if you please) administers to them her Teats. 'Tis said of the Founder of Rome*, that, when a helpless and exposed Infant, He was suckled by a ravenous Wolf. 'Tis certain, that the Natives of Greenland and Zembla, being abandoned by their common Mother, are nourished by the howling Billows. — These furnish them with Plenty of Fish: whose Bones yield Timber for their Huts, and Utensils for their Families; while the Oil and the Flesh, afford a warming Liquor, and a fattening Food, for their Meals. Which are to them, a much bet-

ter contrived for the Benefit and Delight of Mankind. — If we advert to this Peculiarity, it will give the utmost Emphasis to the Patriarch's metaphorical Expression; and an inimitable Beauty to his prophetic Wish, *לרבים יולדו*. Let these my Grandsons grow into a Multitude; or, which is more exactly answerable to the Original, let them multiply abundantly, even like the Fishes of the Ocean, Gen. xlviii. 10.

* Romulus.

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ter-Sustenance, more suitable to their Constitution, and Clime, than the Sallads of the Garden, or the Sheaves of the Harvest.—Thus does a gracious Providence give to all, even the most destitute of Men, not only their daily Bread, but the Bread which is most proper for their State *; is best adapted to preserve them in Health, in Vigour, and Chearfulness.

As the Sea is peopled with animated Inhabitants, it is also variegated with vegetable Productions. Some, soft as Wool; others, hard as Stone. Some rise, like a leafless Shrub; some are expanded, in the Form of a Net; some grow with their Heads downward, and seem to be hanging on, rather than springing from, the Juttings of the Rocks. These may, with much greater Propriety, than the famous Plantations of *Semiramis*, be called *penfile* Gardens. These—But, methinks, I hear the Check of inspired Wisdom; *Hast Thou entered into the Springs of the Sea? Or hast Thou walked in the Search of the Depth †?* A just Reproof! As my Walk reached no farther than barely the Purlieus of the Ocean; as neither You nor I have ever taken a single Turn among those submarine Groves; as *Moses*, *Joshua*, and *Jonah*, the only Writers that
ever

* This seems to be the Import of *ἐπιβίωσις*, in the fourth Petition of the LORD's Prayer. *Daily Bread*, in Connection with the preceding Clause, (*this Day*) reads flat, and appears superfluous. But the Sentiment is weighty, and the Request very needful, if We understand the Word as *Suidas* has explained its Etymology, *ὅτι τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἀνατρέφει*; or as *Agur* has expressed its Meaning, *Feed me with Food convenient for me.* Prov. xxx. 8.

† Job xxxviii. 16.

ever made the wonderful Tour, intent upon *more important* Themes, have left Us no Memoirs relating to this curious Point; I shall not venture to advance any thing particular on the Subject. Only one Remark I would offer in general—

The Herbs and Trees, subsisting on the Land, are nourished by the Juices, which permeate the Soil, and fluctuate in the Air. For this Purpose, they are furnished with *Leaves*, to collect the one; and with *Roots* to attract the other. Whereas, the Sea-plants, finding sufficient Nourishment in the surrounding Waters, have no Occasion to detach a Party of Roots into the Ground, and forage the Earth for Sustenance. Instead therefore of *penetrating*, they are but just *tacked* to the Bottom; and adhere to some solid Substance, only with such a Degree of Tenacity, as may secure them from being tossed to and fro, by the random Agitation of the Waves.

We see from this, and numberless other Instances, what a *Diversity* there is, in the Operations of the great CREATOR's Hand. Yet every Alteration is an Improvement, and each new Pattern has a *peculiar Fitness* of its own.—The same Oeconomy takes place, such a Difference of Administration I mean, in his Government of the rational World. In “choosing an Heritage for his People,” and assigning a Condition to each of his Servants, there is a great Variety with respect to Individuals; yet a perfect Uniformity, and complete Harmony, with respect to the Whole.—Some He calls out to a Course of distinguished Labours. They make an illustrious Figure in Life, and appear as a City set

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on an * *Hill*! Others He consigns over to Obscurity. They are like the Prophets, whom good *Obadiah* hid in a Cave, and are styled *his secret Ones* †. Those, the Cedars, which stand conspicuous on the Top of *Lebanon*: these, the Violets, which lie concealed at the Foot of a Briar.

St. Paul was eminently qualified for busy Scenes, and the most extensive Services. He is introduced, therefore, into Places of Concourse. His Ministry lies amidst the most renowned and populous Cities. Even his Imprisonment at *Rome*, seems to have been a providential Expedient for fixing Him, as it were, on the Stage of public Observation, and in the very Center of universal Intelligence. Where, his Preaching was like plunging a Stone into the Midst of a smooth Canal; which not only affects the neighbouring Parts of the Surface, but spreads the floating Circles over all the wide Expanse. †.

Whereas, the beloved *John*, being less fitted to bustle among a Crowd, is sent into the unfrequented *solitary* Island; there to indulge the Elights of heavenly Contemplation; and receive, with uninterrupted Attention, the mysterious Visions of GOD.—*Job* shall have Thorns in his Path; have the Dunghil for his Seat; and be exposed, as a Mark to all the Arrows of Tribulation. *Solomon* shall dip his Foot in Oil; shall be elevated on the Throne

* Matt. v. 14.

† Psal. lxxxiii. 3.

‡ Therefore the Apostle, speaking of his Abode and his Preaching at *Rome*, has these very emphatical Words; *That all the Gentiles might hear.* 2 Tim. iv. 17. which, considered in the preceding Light, have a peculiar Propriety. Because, to *Rome* they repaired from all Quarters; and from thence they returned, into all Parts of the known World.

Throne of Royalty; and surrounded with the most lavish Caresses of Heaven.

In all this seeming, this more than seeming Contrariety, there is a Display, not only of sovereign Authority, but of consummate Benignity and Wisdom.—The great HEAD of the Church, acts like a judicious *General*; and appoints such a Station to each of his Soldiers, as corresponds with the Ability He gives. He acts like the most skilful *Physician*; and prescribes such a Remedy for all his Patients, as is most nicely suited to their respective Cases. He knows the precise Point of Time, the particular Place of Abode, the peculiar Circumstances of Condition, which are most exactly proper for each and every of his Children; and, like a tender as well as unerring *Father*; what He knows to be best, that He constantly allots.—I said, like a *General*, like a *Physician*, like a *Father*. But the Comparison is low; the Language is inexpressive; *CHRIST* is all that is implied in these Relations, and unspeakably more—O! that We may rejoice in the Superintendency of such a SAVIOUR; and not only resign Ourselves to his Will, but *thank* Him for managing the Helm. *Thank* Him for steering our Course, through the Changes of the present Hour, and all the Uncertainties of Futurity. Since, whatever our froward and petulant Passions may suggest, The LORD's Ways are so far from being unequal, that they have all possible Fitness and Propriety; they are ordered “in Number, Weight, “and Measure.”

All is so very different from the Prospects, which lately presented themselves, that I can hardly for-

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bear asking, Whether I am not translated into a
new World?—Where are the fruitful Vales, gar-
nished and enriched with the CREATOR's
Bounty? Where are the branching Groves, vocal
and harmonious with their MAKER's Praise?
No cultured Field, no opening Blossom, not so
much as a green Leaf appears. None of my late
Entertainments remain, only the cooling Zephyrs.
Which are no longer perfumed with the *Breath* of
Flowers, but impregnated with the *Freshness* of the
Ocean. Yet, though all those lovely Landscapes
are withdrawn; though the gurgling Fountain is
silenced, and the blooming Garden lost: I am not
far from the Origin, both of the Odours, which
exhale from the one; and of the Crystal, which
flows from the other. I am now upon the Margin
of that *grand Reservoir*, which supplies the Coun-
try with its Fertility, and the Parterre with its
Beauty*.—The Sea is the inexhaustible Cistern of
the Universe. The Air and Sun constitute the
mighty *Engine*, which works without Intermission,
to raise the liquid Treasure. While the Clouds
serve as so many *Aqueducts*, to convey the genial
Stores along the Atmosphere; and distribute them
at seasonable Periods, and in regular Proportions,
through all the Regions of the Globe.

I question, whether the united Application of
Mankind could, with their utmost Skill, and with
all

* Pliny supposes a Query made; *Si quis velit reputare,*
ut Fruges gignatur, Arborea Fruticesque vivant. To which
He gives the following Solution; *In Cælum Aquas mi-*
grare, Animamque etiam Herbis vitalem inde deterre. And
from thence concludes; *Omnes Terræ quoque Vires Aqua-*
rum esse Beneficii.

all possible Percolations, fetch a single Drop of perfectly sweet Water*, from this unmeasurable Pit of Brine. Yet the Action of the solar Heat draws off, every Hour, every Minute, Millions and Millions of Tons, in vaporous Exhalations†. Which, being skillfully parceled out, and securely lodged in the Bottles of Heaven‡; are sent abroad, sweetened and refined, without any brackish Tincture, or the least bituminous Sediment.—Sent abroad upon the Wings of the Wind; to distil in Dews, or pour themselves in Rain; to ooze from the Orifices of Fountains;

* I have not forgotten, what was lately affirmed in our public Papers; That a certain ingenious Gentleman, I think in the City of *Durham*, had found out the Art of sweetening Sea-water.—What he produced, might probably approve itself to the Taste, and not be without its Usefulness. Yet I cannot but query, whether it will be found to have all those fine, balmy, salutiferous Qualities, which distinguish and recommended the *Rain-Water*. Which has been exhaled by the kindly Warmth of the Sun; has been filtrated by passing and repassing through the Regions of the Air; has been clarified in the highest and purest Tracts of the Atmosphere; has been farther refined, and quite perfected, by the searching Agency of the Winds.—I would not attempt to depreciate any valuable Invention; yet I should very much wonder, if the *puny Alembec* could equal this *grand Apparatus* of Nature.

† It is supposed, that from the *Mediterranean* Sea alone, there arises, in vaporous Exhalations, more than five thousand Millions of Tons, within the Space of one Summer-Day. Yet the *Mediterranean* Sea bears no more Proportion to the whole Extent of the Ocean, than a public Road bears to the Dimensions of a County, through which it Leads.

‡ So the Clouds are elegantly styled in sacred Writ, *Job xxxviii. 37.*

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VOL. III

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Fountains *; to trickle along the Veins of Rivu-
lets; to rise in the Cavities of Wells; to roll, in
many a headlong Torrent, from the Sides of Moun-
tains; to flow, in copious Streams, amidst the Bo-
som of burning Deserts, and through the Heart of
populous Kingdoms. In order to refresh and fer-
tilize, to beautify and enrich, every Soil, in every
Clime.

How amiable is the Goodness, and how amazing
is the Power, of the World's Adorable MAKER!
—How *aimable his Goodness*! in distributing so
largely, what is absolutely necessary, and exceed-
ingly beneficial. That Water, without which We
can scarce perform any Business, or enjoy any
Comfort, should be every One's Property. Should
spring up from the Soil; should drop down from
the Clouds; should stream by our Houses; should
take a Journey, from the Ends of the Earth, and
the Extremities of the Ocean, on purpose to serve
Us.—How *amazing his Power*! That a boundless
Mass of fluid Salt, intolerably nauseous to the hu-
man Taste, should be the original Spring, which
deals out every palatable Draught to Mankind, and
quenches the Thirst of every Animal! Doubtless,
the Power by which *this* is effected, can extract
Comfort from our Afflictions, Advantage from our

VOL. III.

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Calamities,

* We are obliged to *Clemens Romanus*, for the most just
and delicate Representation of Fountains and their Use-
fulness, that perhaps any where exists. *Αναοι τι ορυγαι*
απο ανδρων και υμιν ανθρωποις, διχα ελκετωσ παρι-
χουσι τωσ ποσ ζων ανθρωποις μαζεσ, 1 Epist. ad Corinth.
He calls Fountains, the Breasts or Teats of the Earth. The
Comparison, I believe, is his own: and nothing can ex-
ceed it, as to Propriety and Beauty.

Calamities, and *make all Things work together for our Good* *.

Vast and various are the Advantages †, which We derive from the liquid Element: *vast*, as its unbounded Extent; *various*, as its ever-mutable Surface.—The sweet Waters glide along the Earth, in spacious and sportive Currents. With their humid Train, their exhaling Moisture, and their gay Appearance, they enliven and exhilarate the adjacent Country.—While Plenty follows, where-ever they flow.—By giving a continual Shake to the circumambient Air, they prevent its Stagnation; they disperse their own Vapours; and promote the Purity of their Sister-Element. Indeed, these watery Ramblers impart much the same Improvement to the Air, the Prospect, the whole Scene, as Vivacity and Chearfulness add to the Temper of their rational Inhabitants.

These circulating Floods pass by opulent Cities, and receiving all their Filth, rid them of a thousand Nuisances. Which, when once committed

* Rom. viii. 28.

† The high *Value* which Mankind set upon this Element, and the many *Benefits* they receive from its Ministration, both these Particulars are very strongly expressed by the *Hebrews*. Who call a Pool or Reservoir of Water בִּרְכָה; which denotes, in its primary Signification, a *Blessing*, Cant. vii. 4. Isai. vii. 3.—We too seldom think, and indeed we can never fully understand, what signal Mercies we enjoy, in the *most common* Gifts of PROVIDENCE. Was Water alone withheld, the most populous Clime would be without Inhabitants, and the most delicious Spot would degenerate into a Desert. In Allusion to this, our LORD calls the Wilderness and the solitary Land *dry Places*. *Avod'ay* *Matt. xii. 43.*

to these *fluid Scavengers* are as effectually secreted, as if they were buried at the very Center of the Earth.—Yet, though they condescend to so mean an Employ, they are fitted for more honourable Services. They enter the Gardens of a Prince, and compose some of the most delightful Ornaments of the Place. They glitter upon the Eye, as they float in the ample *Canal*. They amuse the Imagination, as they ascend in curious *Jet d'Eaus*. They yield a nobler Entertainment, as, forming themselves into Sheets of sloping Silver, they fall in graceful or in grand *Cascades*.—If, instead of Beautifiers, We think proper to make use of them as *Drudges*, they ply at our Mills; they toil incessantly at the Wheel; and, by working the hugest Engines, rid Us of Abundance of Fatigue, and save Us a proportionable Degree of Expence.

So forcibly they act, when *collected*; and most surprisngly they insinuate, when *detached*. They throw themselves into the Body of a Plant: they penetrate the minutest of its organized Tubes: and, subtil beyond all Expression, they find a Passage through Meanders, *too small* for the Eye to discern, *too numerous* and intricate even for Imagination to follow.—How difficultly does the Mason's Labourer, bending under the Burden of Mortar on his Head, push his Way up the Rounds of a Ladder! While these Servants in the Employ of Nature, carry their Load to a much greater Height; and climb with the utmost Ease, even without the Assistance of Steps or of Stairs. They convey the nutrimental Stores of Vegetation, from the *lowest Fibres* that are plunged into the Soil, to the very *topmost Twigs* that wave amidst the Clouds. They are the Caterers

for the vegetable World * : or (if I may be allowed the Expression) the *Sutlers*, which attend the whole *Host* of Plants ; to furnish them with seasonable Refreshment, and necessary Provision. By means of which, *the Trees of the LORD* are full of Sap, even the Cedars of Lebanon which HE hath planted †. Notwithstanding their prodigious Elevation, and vast Diffusion ; though they are abandoned by Man, and deprived of all human Cultivation ; yet, not a single Branch is destitute of Leaves, nor a single Leaf of Moisture.

Besides the salutary, cleanly, and serviceable Circulation of the Rivers ; the Sea has a Libration,

* St. Peter seems to have hinted at this Property of the Waters, in a remarkable Passage ; which is somewhat obscured in the *English* Version, and therefore seldom understood by the *English* Reader. *The Earth standing out of the Water and in the Water.* 2 Pet. iii. 5.—Which should rather be translated, *The Earth (originally) constituted of, and still subsisting by Water.—Constituted of ;* for Moses calls the chaotic Mass, out of which the Earth was formed, by the Name of *(T) Waters.* Gen. i. 2.—*Subsisting by ;* for Water is, as Theron has observed, the grand Support of material Nature. That which enables her, to bring forth all her vegetable Offspring, and to nurse up all her animated Inhabitants. Being, in short, to the terraqueous Globe, what the vital Fluid is to the human Body : or, as a Poet very elegantly sings,

—The crystal Element,

The chief Ingredient in Heaven's various Works ;

Whose flexible Genius sparkles in the Gem,

Grows firm in Oak, and fugitive in Wine ;

The Vehicle, the Source, of Nutriment

And Life, to all that vegetate or live.

See Dr. ARMSTRONG's Poem on Health.
A Performance as beautiful, as its Subject is desirable.

† Psal. civ. 16.

no less advantageous, and much more remarkable.— Every Day, this immense Collection of Waters, for the Space of five or six Hours, *flows* towards the Land. After a short Pause, it *retires* again to its inmost Caverns; taking up nearly the same Interval for the Retreat, as it required for the Access.— How *great* is the Power, which sets the whole fluid World in Motion! Which protrudes to the Shores such an inconceivable Weight of Waters, without any Concurrence from the Winds, frequently in direct Opposition to all their Force! How *gracious* also is the Providence, which bids the mighty Element perform its tumbling Revolutions, with all the Exactness of Time and Measure! Was it suffered to advance, with a lawless and unlimited Swell; it might sweep over Kingdoms, and deluge whole Continents. Was it irregular and uncertain in its Approaches, Navigation would be at a Stand, and Trade become precarious.—But, being constant at its *stated Periods*, and never exceeding its *appointed* Bounds, it creates no Alarm to the Country, and affords very considerable Aids to Traffic.

I said, *constant*. For at the proper Hour, or rather at the precisely proper Minute, the Waters are sure to be in Motion. They flow with the most ready Obedience, like Servants at their Master's Call. They croud as it were in contending Multitudes, ambitious to perform their CREATOR's Will.—Rushing up our large Rivers, they clear and deepen the Passage. In many Places, they spread a copious Flood, where a dry and empty Waste lay before.

Is the Sailor returned from his Voyage, and waiting at the Mouth of the Channel? The *Flux* is ready to convey his Vessel to the very Doors of the

Owner; and without any Hazard of striking on the Rocks, or being fastened in the Sands.—Has the Merchant freighted his Ship? Would He have it transferred to the Ocean? The *Reflex* tenders its Service; and bears away the Load, with singular Expedition, and with equal Safety.—Behold, O Man! How greatly thou art beloved, how *highly favoured* by thy MAKER! In what Part of his Works has he forgotten or overlooked thy Welfare? Shew me a Creature, point out a Spot; in the Formation or Disposition of which, He has not been mindful of thy Interest? *He has made Thee to have Dominion over the Works of his Hands, and has put all Things in Subjection under thy Feet. All Sheep and Oxen; the Fowls of the Air, and the Fishes; yea, and the Surges of the Sea**, are conducive to thy Benefit. Even these, wild and impetuous as they are, yield their willing Backs, to receive thy Load; and, like a tractable as well as indefatigable Beast of Burden, carry it to the Place, which thou shalt nominate.

What preserves this vast Flood in a State of perpetual Purity? It is the universal Sewers, into which are discharged the Refuse and Filth of the whole World. That which would defile the Land, and pollute the Air, is transmitted to the Ocean; and neither Mischief nor Inconvenience ensue. Those Swarms of *Locusts*—which, while living were a Plague to *Pharaoh*, by their loathed Intrusion; and when dead, might have caused a more dreadful Plague, by their noisome Stench—swept into the Sea, were neither pestilential, nor offensive. How then is this Receptacle of every Nuisance kept clean? Why does it not contract a noxious Taint, and

* Psal. viii. 6, 7, 8.

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diffuse Contagion far and near? Such as would render it a *Grave* to the aquatic, and *Bane* to the terrestrial Animals?—'Tis owing, partly to its incessant Motion, partly to its saline Quality. By the One, it is secured from any *internal* Principle of Corruption; by the other, it works itself clear from every *adventitious* Defilement.

A Directory this, and a Pattern for me!—Thus may divine *Grace*, like the penetrating Power of Salt, cure the Depravity of my Heart, and rectify the Disorders of my Temper! Season my Words, and make all my Conversation savoury!—Thus may a continual Course of *Activity*, in my secular and my sacred Vocation, prevent the pernicious Effects of Indolence! Let me daily exercise, or be attempting to exercise, the Graces of Christianity. . Left Faith become feeble; left Hope contract Dimness; and Charity wax cold.

When I began my Walk, the Waters were upon the Ebb. They slunk away from all the Strand, as an Army overpowered, though not put to Flight, withdraws from the Field. Now like the same Army, re-inspired by their Commanders, or re-inforced by an Accession of Troops, they are returning, as it were, to the Charge.—Wave rises upon Wave, and Billow rolls over Billow. Their Progress is slow, but determined and persevering. Much of the smooth sandy Area is already over-run. The Extremities of the Rocks are covered. The foamy Invaders approach nearer and nearer. Nothing can divert, nothing retard their Course. Though *Canutus* * himself was in the Way; though his
royal

* Alluding to a memorable and instructive Story, recorded of King *Canutus*. Who, probably without having read,

still pressing forward, to the Prize of my high calling in *CHRIST JESUS*.—Differing from those regular Vicissitudes of the Ocean, only in one Particular; That my Endeavours never ebb, my Soul never draws back. Since this would be, if temporary, to my grievous Loss; if final, to my aggravated Perdition.

The Tide is, now, at its Height.—The spacious sandy Plain, on which I lately walked is quite overflowed. A Tract, almost unmeasurable, is taken from our Feet, and hid from our Eyes. A thousand Figures, and a thousand Footsteps, imprinted on the level Beach, are erased. And had there been ten thousand Times ten thousand more, they would all have been obliterated with equal Ease.—How happy are they, whose Sins are thus covered! Whose Iniquities are all blotted out! And not one of their Transgressions remembered any more!—Well my Soul, be of good Comfort. Certainly the Blood of the divine REDEEMER, is able to do this for Thee; even for Thee, the chiefest of Sinners. What Guilt can be *too great*, for an infinite Atonement to expiate? What Guilt can be *so great*, as the Merit of an incarnate GOD? Offering the Body of his Flesh to Death—Offering the Blood of his Heart to be spilt—Offering his very Soul, and his whole Person, through the Eternal SPIRIT, as a spotless Victim, to GOD for Us.—Can I doubt, whether this immensely grand Propitiation, is able to do for my Conscience, what these resurgent Waters have done on the Margin of the Ocean? Would not this be a Dishonour to the blessed JESUS, greater than the Lashes of the Scourge,

Scourge, and the Crown of Thorns; viler than the
Insults, Mockery, and Spitting?

Consider the Sea in another Capacity; and it con-
nects the remotest Realms of the Universe; by fa-
cilitating an Intercourse between their respective In-
habitants. — What short-sighted Beings are Man-
kind! How superficial their Views! How unavoid-
able therefore their frequent Mistakes! The Anti-
ents looked upon this bottomless Deep, as an un-
passable* Gulf. If our Forefathers were so egre-
giously mistaken in this Instance; let not Us too pe-
remptorily pronounce upon any difficult or mysteri-
ous Point: Lest succeeding Generations, or a more
enlightened State, should cover Us with the double
Confusion of *childish* Ignorance, and *foolish* Conceit.

We have clearly demonstrated, We have happily
experienced, the very Reverse of that grey-headed
Surmise to be true. The Ocean, instead of being
a Bar of Separation, is the great Bond of Union.
For this Purposely it is never exhausted; though it
supplies the whole Firmament with Clouds; and
the whole Earth with Rains. Nor ever overflows,
though all the Rivers in the Universe are perpetu-
ally augmenting its Stores, and pouring in their tri-
butary Floods. — By means of this Element, We
travel farther, than Birds of the strongest Pinion
fly; and discover Tracts, which the Vulture's Eye
has never seen †. We make a Visit to Nations, that
he drowned in their midnight Slumbers, when every

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† Job xxviii. 7.

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industrious Person on *this* Part of the Globe, is bestirring Himself in all the Hurry of Business. We cultivate an Acquaintance with the Sun-burnt Negro, and the shivering *Icelanders*. We cross the flaming Line, We penetrate the frozen Pole, and wing our Way even round the World.

This is the great Vehicle of *Commerce*.—Not to mention the floating Castles, which contain whole Armies and their Commanders; which bear the Thunder of the Cannons, and all the dreadful Artillery of War; which are capable of demolishing Fortresses, and spreading Terror among Nations.—Let Us only contemplate the trading Vessels; how numerous! of what large Dimension! and of what prodigious Burdens! which are continually passing and repassing this universal Thoroughfare!

There go the Ships.—Ships, that are freighted, not with Sacks, but with Harvests of Corn; that carry not Pipes, but Vintages of Wine; that are laden, not with Bars of Iron, Blocks of Marble, or Wedges of Gold, but with whole Quarries of massy Stone, and whole Mines of ponderous Metal. All which, lodged in these *volatile Store-houses*, and actuated by the Breath of Heaven, are wafted to the very Ends of 'the Earth: wafted, enormous and unwieldy as they are, more expeditiously than the light *Berlin* bowls along the Road; almost as speedily, as the nimble-footed *Roe* bounds over the Hills*.

Astonishing

* A Ship, under a brisk and steady Gale, will sail at the Rate of 216 Miles in 24 Hours: persevering, if the Wind continues favourable, in the same rapid Career, for several Days together. A Course, which, considering both its *Swiftness* and *Duration*, cannot be equaled by the ablest

Astonishing Ordination of eternal Wisdom!—Yet most graciously contrived for the Benefit of Mankind! I can hardly satisfy my View, in beholding this rolling Chaos, stretched, ten thousand Times farther, than my Eye can reach. I can never cease my Admiration, in contemplating its amazing Properties.—That an Element, so *unstable* and *fugitive*, should bear up such an immense Weight, as would bend the firmest Floors, or burst the strongest Beams!—That the *thin* and *yielding* Air should drive on, with so much Facility and Speed, Bodies of such excessive Bulk, as the Strength of a Legion, or an Army, would be unable to move.—That the Air and the Water, acting in Conjunction, should carry to the Distance of many thousand Miles, what the united Force of Men and Machines, could scarcely drag a single Yard.—Puny and despicable are *our* Attempts: but great and marvelous are *thy* Works, O LORD GOD Almighty! *If thou wilt work*, says the Prophet, *who or what shall let it* *! Neither the Meanness of the Instrument, nor the Greatness of the Event. A Sling and a Stone shall lay the gigantic Bravo in the Dust †. An Ox-Goad shall do more Execution than a Train of Artillery ‡. Even a *Worm shall thresh the Mountains, and beat them small, and make the Hills as Chaff* ||. GOD ALL-SUFFICIENT is his Name, and out of Weakness He maketh his Strength perfect.—O! that We, my dear *Aspasio*—that I especially

ablest Horse, perhaps not by the nimblest Creature that treads the Ground.

* *Isai. xliiii. 13.* † *1 Sam. xvii. 50.* ‡ *Judg. iii. 31.*

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ally—may be strong in the LORD, and in the Power of his Might! Then as the light Air is made to act with a more forcible Impulse, than the most vigorous Engines; as the fluid Water is made to sustain more ponderous Loads, than the most substantial Works of Masonry; so We, who in Ourselves are nothing but *Impotence*, shall be enabled to triumph over the Legions of Hell, and tread down all the Temptations of the World.

How are the Mariners conducted through this *liquid Plain*, than which nothing is more wide, and nothing more wild? Here is no Track to be followed; no Post of Direction to be consulted; nor any Shepherd's Hut, where the wandering Traveler may ask his Way. Yet the Voyage is, perhaps, no less than a thousand Leagues. Are the Voyagers guided, by a Pillar of Fire in the Night, or a moveable Cloud in the Day? As the Sons of *Jacob* and *Joseph* were escorted through the eastern Deserts. No; but by a mean, contemptible, and otherwise worthless *Fossil*.

The Apostle *James* mentions it, as a very observable Fact; that the *Ships*, which are so great, and driven of fierce Winds, yet are turned about with a very small *Helm*, whithersoever the Governor listeth*. Is it not equally wonderful, that they should be led through such a pathless and unmeasurable Waste, by so small an Expedient, as the Intervention of the *Loadstone*†?—Till this surprising Mineral was discovered,

* Jam. iii. 4.

† I am aware, that other Expedients are used for shaping a proper Course on the Ocean; such as making Observations, from the Sun and heavenly Bodies, by mathematical

covered, and its Properties were improved, Navigation lay in its Cradle! Was, at best, a mere Infant, which crept timorously along the Coasts; was obliged to keep within sight of the Shores; and, when once driven out beyond the narrow Sphere of her Land marks, could neither ascertain her Situation, nor pursue her Voyage. But this Guide—when every Beacon on the Top of the Hills, is vanished from the acuteſt Ken; where nothing but Skies are ſeen above, and Seas alone appear below—this Guide points out the proper Paſſage. This communicates an Intelligence, which ſhines clear in the thickeſt Darkneſs, and remains ſteady in the moſt tempeſtuous Agitations. This has given, not indeed Birth, but *Maturity* to Navigation; and turned her ſwadling Bands into *Wings*. This has emboldened her to launch into the Heart of the Ocean, and enabled her to range from Pole to Pole.

A Needle touched by the Loadſtone, guided *Columbus* through the vaſt *Atlantic*, and led Him to the Diſcovery of a new World. The Direction and Advices of this ſimple Inſtrument, have opened for our Sailors a Way to both the *Indies*. And a Sea-Compaſs, which coſt, perhaps, no more than half a Crown, is the Means of conveying into our Harbours the Rarities and Riches of the Univerſe. Thus does GOD, both in the Operations of Nature, and the Adminiſtrations of Providence, accompliſh the moſt important Ends by the moſt inconfiderable Means.—When the formidable *Siſera* is

to
mathematical Inſtruments. But theſe, I believe, are only ſubordinate Aids to the Needle. The grand Regulator is the Magnet. I have heard an experienced Sailor declare; He would rather be without his *Quadrant* than without his *Compaſs*.

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to be cut off, the Blow shall be given, not by
 some puissant Champion, but by the Hand of a
 Woman*. When *Jericho* is to be demolished,
 those impregnable Fortifications shall fall, not be-
 neath the Stroke of battering Engines, but be-
 fore the Sound of Rams Horns †.—When a hun-
 dred thousand *Midianties* are to be routed, the
 LORD of Hosts will gain this signal Victory, not
 by numerous Legions completely armed, but by a
 Handful of *Israelites*, accoutered only with Trum-
 pets, Lamps, and Pitchers ‡.—Who would have
 thought, that from the Root of *Jesse*, a Root out of
 a dry Ground, should arise that great Tree, which
 stretches her Boughs unto the Sea, and her Height unto
 the Heavens, and her Branches unto the Ends of the
 Earth? That the despised *Galilean* and the Carpen-
 ter's Son, should be the SAVIOUR of the World,
 and the HEIR of all Things? Nay; that a
 Person humbled like the meanest of Slaves, and
 executed like the vilest of Malefactors; nailed
 to a Cross, and laid prostrate among the Dead;
 that HE should restore Life and Immortality to
 ruined Sinners; should open the Gates of Grace
 and Glory on lost Mankind? That a few *illiterate*
 Creatures, taken from the Barge, the Oar, and the
 Net, should confute Philosophers, and convert
 Kings; should overthrow the Strong-holds of Ido-
 latry, and plant *Christianity* on its Ruins!—This
 is a Circumstance, which though a Stumbling-
 block to some People, has considerably strengthen-
 ed my Faith. It is perfectly agreeable to the AL-
 MIGHTY's Manner. It is (if I may so speak)
 the distinguishing Turn of his Hand, and the pecu-

* Judg. iv. 9. † Josh. vi. 5. ‡ Judg. vii. 19.

liar *Style* of his Works. Whence does He raise the charmingly beauteous Flower? Whence the magnificent Myriads of the Forest-Oaks? Whence the boundless and inestimable Stores of the Harvest? From rude, from small, almost unnoticed Seeds; from Principles, which bear not the least Proportion to their Effects.—Besides; this most emphatically speaks **THE GOD**. It *shews the Lighting down of his glorious Arm**; and absolutely precludes all the Pretensions of human Arrogance, or finite Power. It appropriates the Honour to that Supreme **AGENT**, before whom the *Easy* and the *Arduous* are both alike. All Men that see it must confess, **THIS HATH GOD DONE**.

Through this Channel, are imported to our Island the choice Productions, and the peculiar Treasures, of every Nation under Heaven. So that You and I can breakfast upon a Dissolution of the *American* Kernel †; and see the rich nutrimental Liquor froth in our Cups, without ever tempting the foaming Brine. We can steep the delicately-flavoured *Chinese* Leaf, in the Waters of our own Well; or spend the Afternoon in our own Parlour, and be regaled with an Infusion of the finely-scented *Arabian* Berry. We can season the friendly Bowl with the Juices of the *Orange*, or refresh our clammy Palate with the Pulp of the *Tamarind*; without feeling that fervent Heat, which imparts such a poignant Relish to the former, and give a fever-cooling Virtue to the latter. We can pile upon our Salvers a Pyramid of *Italian* Figs; fill the Interstices

* *Isai. xxx. 30.*

† Called the *Cocoa*, which affords the principal Ingredient of *Chocolate*, and grows on a small Tree in *America*.

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VOL. II

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terstices with the Sky-dried Raisins of *Malaga*; and form a Summit for the inviting Structure, with the *Pistacia Nut* of *Aleppo*.—By this means, the Eastern Spices exhale their Odours on our Tables; and the Western Canes transfuse their Sweetness into our Viands. We clothe our Bodies with the vegetable Fleeces* of the South, and line our Apparel with warm furry Spoils from the North. We can wear the Pearl, polished in the Abysses of the *Persian Gulf*; and walk on the Carpets, manufactured in the Dominions of the *Great Mogul*; yet neither expose Ourselves to the Rage of boisterous Seas, nor the more dreaded Treachery of barbarous People.—In short; by this grand and beneficial Expedient of Navigation, every Tide wafts into our Ports the Wealth of the remotest Climes, and brings the Abundance of the Universe, to be unladen on our Quays. *London* becomes a Mart of Nations; and almost every private House in the Kingdom, is embellished or accommodated from the four Quarters of the Globe.

Almost every private House—Is not this more like rhetorical Flourish, than real Truth? Are not all the Advantages I have mentioned, the peculiar Portion of the Rich? Is not the Sea, like high Life and the gay World, somewhat *capricious* and *partial*? Bestowing lavishly her Favours on the Wealthy, at the same Time that She neglects the Needy?—Quite the Reverse. Like her most exalted yet most conde-

VOL. III.

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scending

* *Cotton*, which is a Sort of Wool, encompassing the Seed of a Tree.—Its Fruit is of an oval Form, about the Size of a Nut. As it ripens it grows black on the Outside; and, by the Heat of the Sun, opens in several Places, discovering the Cotton through the Clefts, which is of an admirable Whiteness. See CHAMB. *Dict.*

scending CREATOR, She is no Respector of Persons. She deals out her Liberalities to All; to the Wealthy, such as are suitable to their Circumstances; to the Indigent, such as are best adapted to their Condition. If She ornaments the Abodes of the first, She employs the Hands of the last; furnishes *these* with gainful Labour, *those* with elegant Accommodations. What a Multitude of industrious People acquire a Livelihood, by preparing the Commodities intended for Exportation! And what a Multitude of dextrous Artificers maintain their Families, by manufacturing the Materials imported from abroad!

It is reckoned a valuable Species of Beneficence, to provide proper Work for the Poor. This withdraws them from any Temptations, and preserves them from much Wickedness. It hinders them from being a Burden to themselves, and a Nuisance to the Public. They might otherwise be *idle*, and as Vermine on the Body politic: or even *mutinous*, and as Vipers in the Bowels of the Nation. Whereas, by exerting themselves in a due Subordination, and with becoming Diligence, they are the very Sinews of the Community; or like the grand Wheel in the Machine of State, whose incessant Activity distributes Plenty, and pours innumerable Conveniencies through the whole.—What a *Master* then, or rather what a *Mistress*, is the Sea! How extensive her Correspondence, and how large her Demand for Workmen! Into what Branch of Trade does she not enter? What kind of ingenious Science, or useful Toil, does she not befriend? How many Millions of honest, but needy Persons are engaged in her Service? And how amply are they repaid for their Pains!

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Pains! *They that go down to the Sea in Ships, and occupy their Business in great Waters, these Men see the Works of LORD, and his Wonders in the Deep.* They also that dwell among their own People, and abide in the Villages, even they enjoy the Bounty, and share the Advantages of the Ocean. *They suck of the Abundance of the Seas, and of Treasures hid in the Sand* *. For, though it is false Philosophy, to suppose the Waters *themselves* strained through subterranean Passages, into the inland Countries; yet it is an undeniable Truth, that their beneficial *Effects* are transfused into every Town, every Hamlet, and every Cottage.

Surely, the Inhabitants of our Isle, have Reason to turn the Prediction of *Moses*, concerning the Tribe of *Joseph*, into a devout and grateful Acknowledgment.—*Blessed of the LORD is † our Land. Blessed with the precious Things of Heaven, with the Dew, and with the Deep that coucheth beneath. With the precious Things brought forth by the Sun, and with the precious Things thrust forth by the Moon. With the chief Things of the antient Mountains, and with the precious Things of the everlasting Hills: and with the precious Things of the Earth, and the Fulness thereof ‡.*
—May

* Deut. xxxiii. 19.

† *Is*, (so I would translate the Original) not *be*; in the *predictive*, not *precatory* Form. This implies a Fulness of Faith, and distinguishes Prophecy from Prayer; best suits the extraordinary Illumination of *Moses*; and does most Honour to the omniscient SPIRIT.

‡ Deut. xxxiii. 13, 14, 15, 16. Here seems to be an exact Summary, and a poetical Description of the Riches of Nature.—*The precious Things of Heaven*; or *Rain*, which descends from the upper; and *Dew*, which is formed in the lower Regions of the Firmament.—*The*

—May we also enjoy *the Good-will of HIM, who dwelt in the Bush**; and the Grace of HIM, who hung on the Tree! May the *eternal GOD* be our Refuge; and underneath both Us and our Interests, may his *everlasting Arms* be spread!—Happy then wilt Thou be, thrice happy, O England! Thy temporal Advantages, and thy spiritual Privileges considered, it may truly be said, *Who, or what Nation, is like unto Thee?*

This for my Country. Now let me wish for myself:

*GOD of all Worlds! Source and Supreme of Things!
From whom all Life, from whom Duration springs!*

Intense

Deep that coucheth beneath; Seas, Rivers, Fountains, Wells, which lie in the Bosom of the Soil; and are Sources of Fertility and Plenty.—*The precious Things brought forth by the Sun*, must certainly denote the Herbs, Plants, Trees, and all Manner of *Vegetables*, with their respective Fruits.—*The precious Things thrust forth by the Moon*, may probably refer to the *mineral Kingdoms*; in the Formation of which, that Ruler of the Night may have a considerable Influence. The Moon is confessedly the Parent of Tides; and may put in Motion those bituminous and saline Fluids, which, circulating through the Pores of the Earth, and fixing in Beds of homogeneous Matter, are supposed to commence Minerals.—As our sacred Philosopher has already specified the vegetable Tribes, and (if I mistake not) the Beds of Fossils, *the principal Things of the Mountains and Hills*, should signify the Sheep, Goats, and other valuable Animals, which feed upon those vast Declivities. Then, *the precious Things of the Earth*, may express those Herds of larger Cattle, which have their Pasturage in the Plains, Valleys, and lower Grounds. A Sense, which recommends itself from this Consideration, That the Wealth of the Antients consisted chiefly in Cattle.—*The Fulness thereof*, may be a Kind of Recapitulation: a comprehensive Term, including the whole Produce of the *terraqeous Globe*; the magnificent *Liberality of JEHOVAH* to his People.

* Deut. xxxiii. 16.

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*Intense O! let me for thy Glory burn,
Nor fruitless view my Days and Months return.
Give me with Wonder at thy Works to glow,
To grasp thy Vision, and thy Truths to know:
O'er Time's tempestuous Sea to reach thy Shore,
To sing thy Praise, and all thy Grace adore,
When Seas shall roll, and Time shall be no more.* }

You see, -*Aspasio*, I have been studying the Volume of Nature; endeavouring to read some of its capital Characters, and learn some of its instructive Lessons. The Sea has been the Page. But how *superficial* is my Perusal, and how *scanty* my Knowledge. Little, very little have I beheld or conceived, relating to those Works of Wonder, which the vast unfathomable Deep contains *—the Plants it produces, and the Creatures it nourishes—its stupendous Rocks, rising to the Skies; and its inaccessible Caverns, sinking to the Center—the Beds of Pearl, which are its native Growth; and the Loads of Gold, which it has gained by Shipwreck; and those Heaps of Shells, which pave the Floor of the watery Realms.—*So* superficial are my Views of *CHRIST*; *so* scanty is my Acquaintance with the Gospel.

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* Should the Reader desire to see this Subject, more largely opened, and more fully improved, I would refer Him to *Contemplations on the Ocean*, lately published by my ingenious and pious Friend Mr. PEARSALL. In which, a refined Fancy, and a delicate Philosophy, compose a Chaplet for evangelical Divinity. Uniting some of their beautiful and fragrant Flowers, to adorn the Gospel of GOD our SAVIOUR—to quicken and refresh the Spirits of his People—to invite and win the Hearts of the Disobedient.

You, I presume, are sitting at the Feet of that Sublime TEACHER; and attending to the Dictates of *HIS* Mouth, in *whom* are hid all the Treasures of *Wisdom and Knowledge* *. Let me promise myself a Communication of *your* Thoughts, as I have freely transmitted a Specimen of *mine*. And I will make no Scruple to acknowledge the Superiority of the Exchange; that I receive

Χρυσέα χαλχείων, ἐκάλουβοι' ἐννεάβοιων.

Or, as the eloquent *Isaiab* speaks; *For Brasses you will bring Gold, and for Iron you will bring Silver* †: rendering me, by this Intercourse, your more *obliged*, though it is scarce possible for me to be, more than I already am,

Your affectionate

THERON.

P. S. Monsieur *Paschal*, who was remarkably fond of *Brevity*, makes an odd Excuse for transgressing, on a particular Occasion, his favourite Rule. He intreats his Friend to pardon the unusual Length of his Epistle, by assuring Him, *That he had not Time to make it shorter*—I cannot, it must be confessed, adopt this Philosopher's Apology. For, I have purposely lengthened my Letter, with a View of setting, in this *one* Circumstance, a Pattern for my *Aspasio*.

* Col. ii. 3.

† Isai. lx. 17.



LETTER X.

ASPASIO to THERON.

Dear THERON,

I Thank you for your *Letter*, because it entertains and improves me. I thank you for your *Postscript*, because it is my Encouragement and my Apology.— I am set down to write, with a copious Stock of Materials. It will be far more difficult to contract, than to enlarge. I must therefore acknowledge myself obliged to your Candour, for assigning me the *easier* Task.—That Prolixity, which, in others, might be ungenteel and faulty; is, in me, an Act of Complaisance, and an Instance of Duty.

Though absent from You, I went with You in your late Ramble. Your descriptive Pen has made me Partaker of the *ideal Delight*: may Divine Grace enable me to share in the *spiritual Improvement*!— For indeed the Fields of Nature, and the Scenes of Creation; the wise Contrivance, and beneficial Order of the Universe; yield ample Matter for religious Improvement. They tell Us a thousand and a thousand animated, affecting, noble Things, concerning the blessed GOD, and his glorious Perfections. Yet they cannot tell Us the *noblest* Things. They cannot give Us the grandest View of the divine MAJESTY, nor present Us with the brightest Display of his Excellencies. Here the whole

Creation falters, or rather confesses its Impotency. *The Depth saith, It is not in me; and the Sea saith, It is not with me.* It is not to be found on the Globe of the Earth, nor to be traced in the Circuit of the Skies. When you displayed the Beauties of the Morn, breaking forth from the Obscurity of Night; when you adopted that fine spirited Aspiration from our philosophic Poet; I could not forbear adding—"Thus may the gracious GOD, who
 "commandeth the Light to shine out of the Mid-
 "night Darkness, shine into our Hearts; and give
 "that incomparably glorious Knowledge, the Know-
 "ledge of his blessed SELF! Which, though dis-
 "cernable through all the Tracts of Creation, and
 "derivable from every Work of his Almighty Hand;
 "yet no where beams forth with such complete and
 "such amiable Lustre, as in the Person of JESUS
 "CHRIST*."—Here we behold all the sublime Perfections of the DEITY, not only manifested with inimitable Splendour, but operating for our own Advantage. We behold them, as *Job* speaks, *for ourselves*†; and cannot but receive inexpressible Refreshment and Joy from the View.

—When You walked beneath the Shade of those huge, horrid, and enormous Cliffs; both amused and alarmed, at their stupendous Magnitude, and frightful Irregularity.—When You cast your Eye upon the smooth floating Expanse, which spread itself with boundless and amazing Magnitude below—When You surveyed the unmeasurable Arches of the Sky, bending to their mighty Base all around, and raised to inconceivable Heights above—When You meditated, in that awful Solitude, on the wild-

* 2 Cor. iv. 6.

† Job xix. 27.

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est and most magnificent Appearances of Nature—
 I felt the same Kind of devout Astonishment with
 yourself. While the Soul was wrapt in *pensive Stil-*
ness, and *pleasing Dread* *, methought, I heard a
 Voice, or something like a Voice, from the silent
 Spheres, as well as from the sounding Seas. It
 seemed to echo back, what the Angel, whom *John*
 saw flying in the midst of Heaven, once proclaim-
 ed; “*Worship HIM, who made Heaven and Earth,*
and the Sea, and the Fountains of Water †. Wor-
 ship Him, who stretched out that azure Pavilion
 with such surpassing Grandeur: who measured
 yonder World of Waters, in the Hollow of his
 Hand: and before whom, this immense Range of
 mountainous Cliffs, is but as Dust upon his
 Scale.”

When you described the *dismal Situation* of a
 Wretch, exposed on the Edges of the tremendous
 Precipice; hanging over the ragged Rocks, and the
 unfathomable Gulf; and cleaving only to a slender,
 treacherous, breaking Bough: how heartily did I
 join in your adoring Acknowledgments to that kind,
 interposing, blessed Hand, which rescued us from
 an infinitely more threatening and dreadful Danger!
 Rescued us, as *Slaves*, from the Dominion of the
 Devil: snatched us, as *Brands*, from the inextin-
 guishable Burnings. And bid Us (O marvelous,
 superabundant

* It seems to have been such a Kind, not of *anxious*
 but of *pleasing Dread*, which seized the Disciples on the
 Mount of Transfiguration: *ἦσαν γὰρ ἐκφοβοί*, for they were
 struck with a profound, but delightful Awe. *Delightful*,
 otherwise it is not easy to conceive, why *Peter* should pro-
 pose to *build Tabernacles* there, or how He could wish to
 continue in those Circumstances, *Mark ix. 6.*

† Rev. xiv. 7.

superabundant Goodness!) bid Us possess the Liberty of Righteousness; bid Us inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.

When You mention the past Indolence, and the present Fervour of your Prayers, I could not forbear reiterating my Praises to GOD on your Behalf. This is a Proof, my dear *Theron*, that your Feet are in the Way everlasting. For it is written, *They shall come with Weeping, and with Supplications will I lead them**. This is the Work of the HOLY GHOST, moving and influencing your Heart. For what saith the Scripture? *I will pour upon them the Spirit of Grace and of Supplication*†. And our LORD Himself mentions this, as the Indication of a hopeful Condition; *Behold! he prayeth*‡.—Had not *Saul* prayed before? Yes; and made long Prayers too. But he never, till that Instant, was sensible of his undone and damnable Condition. Never cried to GOD from the Depths of his Distress, or from the Depths of his Heart. Nor ever solicited the Throne of Grace, in the all-prevailing Name of *JESUS CHRIST*.—His Prayers, till then, were somewhat like the *Motes*, which fluctuate in the Air, without any vigorous Impulse, or any certain Aim. But, in that Hour, they were like the *Arrow*, which springs from the strained Bow; and, quick as Lightning, flies to the Mark.

I was pleased to find You, in the Process of your Letter, insensibly forgetting the Narrative; and so engaged by the Subject, that you spoke not as the *Relater*, but as the *Beholder*.—Thus may We always be affected, when We study the Oracles of Truth. Study them, not as cold unconcerned Critics, who

* Jer. xxxi. 9. † Zech. xii. 10. ‡ Acts ix. 11

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are only to judge of their Meaning ; but as Persons *deeply interested* in all they contain. Who are particularly addressed in every Exhortation, and directed by every Precept. Whose are the Promises, and to whom belong the precious Privileges.—When We are enabled thus to *realize* and *appropriate* the Contents of that invaluable Book ; then we shall taste the Sweetness, and feel the Power of the Scriptures. Then We shall know, by happy Experience, that our Divine MASTER's Words, are not barely Sounds and Syllables, but *they are Spirit, and they are Life* *.

I was still more agreeably entertained, with your Picture of *Commerce* ; and your Display of the Advantages, which We receive from *Navigation*. One Advantage, however, I can specify, which is greater than any, greater than all, You have celebrated. An Advantage, which will endear and ennoble Navigation, so long as the Sun and Moon endure. The Gospel, my Friend, the *Gospel* of our Salvation, was conveyed through this Channel. Without such a Vehicle, how could that inestimable Commodity have reached our Island ? The Volume that comprizes it, and the Preacher that published it, both were imported, both brought to Us by Shipping. And may We not say, with the inraptured *Isaiah* ? *How beautiful are the Feet of them, that bring good Tidings ; that publish Peace ; that bring good Tidings of Good ; that publish Salvation ; that say unto Zion, Thy GOD reigneth* †. It is pleasant to hear

* John vi. 63.

† *Isai. lii. 7.* Never did Language bespeak an *inraptured* Soul, more significantly than this sacred Exclamation. The Prophet is all Wonder and all Joy. He

is

hear their Voice ; pleasant to contemplate their Message ; and pleasant even to behold, the Ground on which they trod, or the very Waves over which they sailed.—This made the holy Prophet rejoice in Spirit, when he foresaw the extensive Spread of his MASTER's Glory, and the certain Commencement of *our* Happiness. This put into his Mouth that affectionate and congratulatory Address ; which, in a very particular Manner, is directed to Us and our Countrymen : *Sing unto the LORD a new Song, and his Praise from the Ends of the Earth : ye that go down to the Sea, and all that is therein ; ye Isles, and the Inhabitants thereof. Let the Wilderness and the Cities thereof lift up their Voice ; let the Inhabitants of the Rock sing, let them shout from the Top of the Mountains. Let them give Glory unto the LORD ; and declare his Praise in the Islands **.

We

is so enamoured with his Subject, and so captivated with the Glory of the Gospel, that He can never say enough of its Excellencies.—*Good Tidings* ; the very best, that Earth could receive, or Heaven proclaim. *Good Tidings of Good* ; a most comprehensive Good ; a Collection of every Blessing ; or all good Things in one. *Publish Peace* ; Peace with GOD, the everlasting King ; and that sweet Peace of Conscience, which the whole World cannot give. *Publish Salvation* ; or that Gift of Righteousness which is the meritorious Cause, together with that Spirit of Liberty and Spirit of Adoption, which are the rich and grand Constituents of Salvation. *That say unto Zion, Thy GOD reigneth* ; not Sin and Satan, not Lust and Appetite, oppressive Tyrants and worse than Egyptian Task-Masters ; but the All-wise and infinitely Gracious JEHOVAH. He, even He setteth up his pure, his peaceful, his spiritual Kingdom, in the Believer's Heart, in the Gentile Nations, and in all Lands.

* Isai. xlii. 10, 11, 12.

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We read, in *Ezekiel*, of the *most magnificent Fleet*, that ever ploughed the Seas. The Ship-Boards were of the Fir-Trees of *Senir*, and the Masts of the Cedars * of *Lebanon*. Oars were hewed from the Oaks of *Bashan*, and Benches of Ivory were brought from the Isles of *Chittim*. The fine Linen and brodered Work of *Egypt*, floated to the Wind, and formed the Sails. While Blue and Purple from the Isles of *Elishah*, composed the Rigging, and cloathed the Mariners.—Let Us suppose, that the Freight of this splendid Navy, was proportioned, in Dignity and Value, to its sumptuous Tackling. Yet how poor, how despicable were either, were both, if estimated with the Treasures of the Gospel: those *divine Treasures*, which spring from the Imputation of our REDEEMER's Righteousness! And which have much the same kindly Influence on *religious Practice*, as Navigation, with all her Improvements, has upon Traffic.—Give me leave to confirm this Assertion, by selecting a few Instances, and applying them in a few Interrogatories.

One of the Benefits, proceeding from the Imputation of *CHRIST's* Righteousness, is *Pardon*. Pardon, not partial, but complete. A Pardon of each Sin, be it ever so *heinous*; a Pardon of all Sins, be they ever so *numerous*. For thus saith GOD the LORD, who sent both his Prophets and Apostles, preaching Peace by *JESUS CHRIST*. *I will pardon ALL their Iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me* †.—To learn the desirable Nature of this Blessing, let Us

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* Ezek. xxvii. 5, &c.

† Jer. xxxiii. 8.

step back into the Annals of History, and attend a traitorous unhappy Nobleman to his *vindictive* Exit. His Body is demanded by the Ministers of Justice. Reluctant and trembling, He is conducted to the Scaffold. There, the alarmed Criminal sees the mourning Block. Sees the glittering Ax. Sees the Coffin prepared for his Corps. Sees thousands of anxious Spectators; waiting, with eager Looks and throbbing Hearts, the fearful Catastrophe. In a Word; he sees Death advancing, with all the Solemnities of *Horror* and *Woe*.—Time elapses. The preparatory Ceremonies are dispatched. The fatal Period is arrived. No longer Respite can be allowed. He must submit to immediate Execution. He prostrates himself to receive the Stroke. But—seized with new Terrors, at the poised Ax, and approaching Blow, He starts from the dangerous Posture.—Again he bends, and again snatches his Neck from the impending Edge.—A third Time, He lifts his pale Countenance, to the pitying Crowds, and departing Light.—Once more He bows to the Block, and once more raises his Head, in *wishful Expectation* of the Royal Clemency.—At this critical Instant; at this Moment of awful Suspence; had a Messenger appeared, with a Shout of Joy upon his Tongue, and a sealed Pardon in his Hand; O! how transporting the News! welcome, *inexpressibly welcome* the Favour!—What was denied to his passionate Desires; denied to the importunate Solicitations of his Friends; is freely offered to Us in the Gospel of *CHRIST*: a Pardon of infinitely higher Consequence; which obliterates Millions and Millions of rebellious Acts: which extends its blessed Effects, not merely through the

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little Span of Life, but beyond the Gates of the Grave—beyond the Boundaries of Time—through all the Ages of Eternity.

How unfathomable is that immense Flood, on which my *Theron* lately exercised his Contemplation! The toiling Plummets, with all their Length of Cordage, are unable to find a Bottom. Were the hugest Millstones, or the highest Towers, or the most spacious Cities, cast into that prodigious Gulf, they would be totally overwhelmed, and irrecoverably lost. Therefore the inspired Prophet, to shew the *boundless* Extent of the divine Mercies in *JESUS CHRIST*, and to denote the *Fulness* of their Pardon who are cleansed in the REDEEMER's Blood, hath illustrated both by this grand Similitude. *Thou wilt cast all their Sins into the Depths of the Sea**—not one, or a few, but *all* their Sins—not barely behind thy Back, but into the *Sea*—and not into the shallow Parts, but into the very *Depths* of the Ocean—so that they shall never rise up in Judgment; never be taken notice of; no, nor ever be remembered any more.

With an Act of total Indemnity, let Us join a thorough *Restoration to Favour*.—If the Wrath of an earthly King be as *the Roaring of a Lion*†; how much more tremendous is *His* Indignation, who is able to cast both Body and Soul into Hell! If the Favour of an earthly Sovereign be as *Dew upon the Grass*; how much more desirable and delightful *HIS* Loving-kindness, whom all Things in Heaven and Earth obey!—By the Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*, we are freed from all foreboding Apprehensions of the former, and established in the comfortable Possession

* Mic. vii. 19.

† Prov. xix. 12.

fession of the latter. The Gospel renews and ratifies that joyful Proclamation of the angelic Host, *Peace on Earth, and Good-will to Men* *. GOD is not only pacified towards Believers, but well pleased with them in his dear SON. *Well pleased*, says the Prophet, *for his Righteousness sake*. Beheld in this spotless Robe, they are the Objects of his complacential Delight, and He rejoices over them to do them Good.

Nay, they are made Children; *Sons and Daughters, of the LORD Almighty* †. And if Sons, then Heirs; Heirs of GOD, and joint Heirs with CHRIST ‡. —*As many as received Him*, to justify them by his precious Blood and imputed Righteousness; *to them gave He Power*, the Prerogative or Privilege, *to become the Sons of GOD* ||. As verily and truly the Sons of GOD, as ever they were the Children of their natural Parents.—The chief Captain mentioned in the *Acts*, purchased his Freedom of the Imperial City Rome, with a great Sum of Money §. If such a little transient Immunity, was so valuable in his Esteem; who can express the Worth, who can conceive the Dignity, of this divine Adoption? Yet it belongs to Those, who receive the Gospel, and are interested in CHRIST.—They have Access to the Omnipotent BEING; such free and welcome Access, as a beloved Child to an indulgent Father. To Him they may fly for Aid, in every Difficulty; and from Him obtain a Supply, in all their Wants.

GOD, as the sacred Charter runs, IS THEIR GOD. All his lovely, all his adorable Perfections,

* Luke ii. 14. † 2 Cor. vi. 18. ‡ Rom. viii. 17.
 || John i. 12. § Acts xxii. 28.

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tions, are their glorious Inheritance, and their exceeding great Reward. That eternal Power, to which nothing is impossible, exerts itself as their *Guard*; and that unerring Wisdom, from which nothing is concealed, acts as their *Guide*. His very Justice is no longer an incensed Adversary, demanding Vengeance or meditating Destruction; but a faithful *Guarantee*, to provide for the punctual Execution of the REDEEMER's Treaty, and for their complete Enjoyment of its various Blessings. —What a Privilege is this! Rather what a *Cluster* of Privileges is Here! Weigh the Kingdoms of the World; cast all the Glories of them into the Scale; and they will be found, when compared with these divine Prerogatives, *emptier* than the Bubble that bursts, *lighter* than the Spark that expires.

In the Gospel, which is the Ministration of Righteousness, are given exceeding great and precious Promises. Of such *Value*, that they were procured by the Blood of *CHRIST*; of such *Certainty*, that they are ratified by the Oath* of *JEHOVAH*. So *durable*, that, though all *Flesh* is Grass, and all the Goodliness thereof as the Flower of the Grass, this Word of our *GOD* abideth for ever †; so *efficacious*, that there are no such *Cordials* to revive our fainting, and no such *Bulwarks* to secure our indangered Souls. With these the Bible is as richly replenished, as the clear midnight Sky is bespangled with Stars. They are all *Yea and Amen*, consigned over as a sure unalienable Portion, to them that are in *JESUS CHRIST* †.

Another Benefit, given in consequence of the REDEEMER's Righteousness, is the *sanctifying*
VOL. III. O SPIRIT.

* Heb. vi. 17. † 1 Pet. i. 23. † 2 Cor. i. 20.

SPIRIT. A most comprehensive Blessing this! Our SAVIOUR intimates, that it includes every heavenly Gift, is an Assemblage of all good Things*. —It must, doubtless, be a singular Comfort to blind *Bartimeus*, when his Eyes were opened, and He beheld the all-chearing Light of the Sun †! So, and far more comfortable, are the *inlightening* Influences of the SPIRIT; when they shine upon Us wretched Creatures, who sit in Darkness and the Shadow of Death. When they reveal an all-sufficient SAVIOUR, dying for *our* Sins, and rising again for *our* Justification.—Who can imagine the Satisfaction and the Transport of the *Leper*, when He felt Himself healed of his inveterate Disease? Felt the soothing Sensations of Ease, where Sores rankled and Pain raged! Instead of infeebling Langours and loathsome Deformity, Vigour braces his Limbs, and Comeliness blooms in his Countenance ‡. Equally benign and equally salubrious, is the regenerating Agency of the Divine SPIRIT, on our depraved, polluted, sensual Minds.—How signal was the Recovery, and how welcome the Change! When that unhappy Creature, so wildly agitated by a *mischievous Dæmon*, was reinstated in the peaceful Possession of Himself and his Faculties! When, instead of unnaturally cutting his own Flesh, or committing barbarous Outrages on innocent Travelers, He sat composed and attentive at the Feet of *JESUS* ||! Receiving heavenly Instruction from his Lips, and learning the Meekness of Wisdom from his Example. So salutary and beneficial is the *transforming* Power of the HOLY GHOST

* Compare *Matt.* vii. 11. with *Luke* xi. 13. † *Mark* x. 52. ‡ *Matt.* viii. 3. || *Mark* v. 15.

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GHOST the Comforter ; softening the rugged, sweetening the morose, and calming the passionate Temper.—It is undoubtedly the utmost Improvement and the highest Happiness of our Nature, to have the Image of the blessed GOD re-instamped on our Hearts. This is an Earnest, and an Anticipation also, of endless Felicity. A Bud which will open in Heaven, and spread into immortal Glory. A Dawn, which will shine more and more, till the Sun of Righteousness arises, and brightens it into everlasting Day. This Bud the sanctifying SPIRIT ingrafts, this Dawn the Grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST diffuses, in the barren and benighted Soul.

In a Word ; receive this Righteousness, and You have a Title to all Blessings, whether they be present or future, bodily or spiritual, temporal or eternal. From the necessary Conveniencies of Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on ; even to the Crown of Glory, and the Fulness of Joy. All are dependent on, all are connected with, our REDEEMER's Righteousness *.—You see now, *Theron*, That our Scheme, has no Tendency to impoverish your spiritual Condition, or diminish your true Riches : any more than those Tracts of Water, which surround our Island, are detrimental to the Wealth of its Inhabitants. Detrimental ! No ; they are an inexhaustible Source

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* This Righteousness is styled, in the sacred Language, *Righteousnesses*. *Vitringa*, assigning the Reason of this peculiar Phraseology, says ; *Dicitur autem Vati nostro hæc Justitia צדקת, terminatione plurali—tum ob Excellentiam ejus—tum ob Amplitudinem, qua omnibus Peccatoribus credentibus ad Salutem sufficiat—tum ob Effecta, quatenus complectitur omnia Jura Filiorum DEI. VITRING. in Jesai xlv. 24.*

of Treasure. They convey to our Use the choicest Accommodations, and the most elegant Delights. Such as would in vain be expected, if the whole Ocean was converted into the finest Meads, and most fertile Pastures. So—but to apply this Comparison, would forestal your principal Question.

“ Do not these Favours, though unspeakably
 “ precious in themselves, tend to the Introduction
 “ or Support of Ungodliness ? ”—Quite the Reverse. Have We *Redemption* through our *SAVI-OUR*’s Blood, even the Forgiveness of our Sins ? We are redeemed, not that We may sink in Supineness, or launch into Licentiousness, but that We may be a peculiar People, zealous of good Works *.—Are We made the *Children* of GOD ? Then let our Light so shine before Men, that others, seeing our good Works, may glorify our FATHER which is in Heaven †. This is the genuine Consequence of such a Doctrine, and the proper Effect of such a Benefit.—Are We vested with sacred *Privileges* ! These admonish Us, these urge Us, and these dispose Us, to walk worthy of HIM, who hath called us to his Kingdom and Glory ‡. Shall not the Citizens of Heaven be animated with higher Views, than the Slaves of Appetite, and Drudges of the World ?—Are We constituted *Heirs* of the *Promises* ? The Grace which they ascertain, is intended to make Us Partakers of a Divine Nature § ; and the Encouragement which they administer, incites Us to cleanse Ourselves from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, incites Us to perfect Holiness in the Fear of GOD §.

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* Tit. ii. 14.
 || 2 Pet. i. 4.

† Matt. v. 16.
 § 2 Cor. vii. 1.

‡ 1 Thess. ii. 12.

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—Such high Immunities are a most endearing Persuasive, not to disgrace, but magnify, not to provoke, but please, their unspeakably beneficent
AUTHOR.

I might farther observe, that Holiness is one of the most distinguished Blessings in our System. Nay, is the very *central* Blessing, to which all the others verge; in which they all terminate.—Were We *chosen* from Eternity? It was for this Purpose, that We may be holy and unblameable in Love*.—Are We *called* in Time? It is to this Intent, that We may shew forth the Praises of Him, who hath called Us out of Darkness into his marvelous Light†.—Are We *created again* in CHRIST JESUS? It is, to capacitate Us for acceptable Service, and to furnish Us unto every good Work‡. *I will put my Spirit within You, saith the LORD.* For what End? *That Ye may walk in my Statutes, and keep my Judgments, and do them* ||. Here comes in my Theron's Favourite, sincere Obedience. And GOD forbid, that We should hold the Door, or shut our Arms, against so acceptable a Guest!—Far, very far from discarding sincere Obedience, We would only introduce it, under its due Character, and in its proper Order. *Under its due Character*; as the Fruit, not the Cause, of our Interest in CHRIST's Righteousness. *In its proper Order*; as following, not preceding, the Gift of Justification.

These Privileges, my dear Friend, are salutary, as the Pool of *Bethesda* §. They are restorative, as the Waters of *Siloam* †. Or like that sacred Stream flowing from the *Sanctuary*; which healed the Ri-

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vers,

* Eph. i. 4.

† 1 Pet. ii. 9.

‡ Eph. ii. 10.

|| Ezek xxxvi. 27.

§ John v. 4.

† John ix. 7.

vers, healed the Sea, and made even the Desert flourish *.—If Justification by the Righteousness of *CHRIST* had a Tendency, to subvert the Foundation of Holiness ; to confirm the hypocritical Professor, in his Neglect of moral Duties ; or discourage the sincere Convert from the Pursuit of real Virtue ; it would, doubtless, be unworthy of any Acceptation, or rather worthy of universal Abhorrence. But I dare appeal, not only to the Nature of the Doctrine, and the Reason of Things, but to the Experience of All ; yes, of all who *have tasted, that the LORD is gracious* †.—“ Speak, “ Ye who are enabled to believe, that GOD is “ reconciled ; has received the all-satisfying A- “ tonement ; and placed his SON’s Righteous- “ ness to your Account ! That He regards You “ as his Children, and will receive You to his “ Glory !—Have You not, under *such* Con- “ victions, felt your Hearts exulting with conscious “ Joy ; and every Power of your Souls springing “ forward, to glorify your heavenly FATHER “ —glorify Him by every Instance of Obedience, “ Fidelity, and Zeal ?”

Can such invaluable Benefits have a prejudicial Influence on our Practice, if, to the Consideration of their superlative Worth, We add that *unequaled Price*, by which they were purchased ?—HE who is high above all Height, humbled Himself to be made of a Woman, and born in a Stable ; that We might be admitted into the Family of GOD, and exalted to the Mansions of Heaven. And will this great Humiliation, which is the Basis of our Happiness, prompt Us to look down with Con-

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* Ezek. xlvii. 8, 9.

† 1 Pet. ii. 3.

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tempt on Others, or entertain *arrogant* Thoughts of Ourselves?

The ONLY BEGOTTEN and the supreme Delight of the FATHER, was numbered with Transgressors, and ranked with Felons; that We might be joined to the innumerable Company of Angels, and associated with Saints in Glory everlasting. And will any One make this a Precedent or a Plea, for *walking in the Counsel of the Ungodly*; for *standing in the Way of Sinners*; or *sitting in the Seat of the Scornful* *?

All manner of Evil was spoken of the faultless JESUS; his blessed Name was vilified by blaspheming Tongues, and his unblameable Conduct blackened with the foulest Aspersions; on purpose that We may be applauded, when We are judged; and each hear those transporting Words, WELL DONE THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT †! Will this embolden Us to *dishonour* our LORD, and *stain* our holy Profession? Shall We from hence be induced to open the Mouths of his Enemies, and furnish them with Occasion to speak reproachfully?

HE went, galled with the Lashes of the Scourge, and penetrated with the pungent Thorns; He went, loaded with the execrable Crosses ‡, and marking the Road with his precious Blood; *thus* the King of

O 4

Heaven

* Psal. i. 1.

† Matt. xxv. 21.

‡ *John* xix. 17: Should it be objected, that they compelled *Simon the Cyrenian* to bear his Cross. I acknowledge it. But this, I apprehend, was not done, till they perceived our LORD ready to faint under the Load. Nor did his cruel Enemies even then disburden Him, because they pitied, or purposed to relieve Him; but only to reserve Him for greater Ignominy and severer Torment.

Heaven went—to his Throne? No, but to his ignominious and tormenting Exit: that We may enter into the celestial *Sion*, with Songs of Triumph on our Lips, and with everlasting Joy on our Heads. Does this invite Us to go, crowned with Rose-buds, to the House of *Riot*; or go, muffled in Disguise, to the *Midnight-Revel*? Will it not rather incline Us, to sit down at his pierced Feet, and bathe them with our Tears, and take Delight * in mourning for our crucified LORD?

Behold! He hangs on the cursed Tree. There, there He hangs; rent with Wounds, and racked with Pain. He pours his Groans, and spills his Blood. He bows his Head, his patient princely Head, and dies—astonishing, transporting Consideration! He dies for *You*! He dies for *Me*!—And will this harden our Hearts, will this arm our Hands, to crucify Him afresh by any allowed Iniquity? Does not Reason suggest, and Christianity dictate, and all that is ingenuous enforce, the Apostle's Inference? *If One died for All, then they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them* †.

He thought upon Us, long before the Foundations of the World were laid; He remembers Us, now he

* The Sorrow, arising from such tender and grateful Views of the crucified *JESUS*, is that evangelical godly Sorrow, which *worketh Repentance unto Salvation not to be repented of*, 2 Cor. vii. 10. And is there not Reason—when We consider the Pains He felt, the Curse He bore, and the Blood He shed—is there not abundant Reason to say, with *Homer's* afflicted Hero?

Τὴν πρῶτον ἡμέραν τοῦ χρόνου.

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† 2 Cor. v. 15, 16.

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he is exalted to the Right-hand of the MAJESTY in the Heavens; and will never, never forget Us, through all the Revolutions of Eternity. And is this a Motive to forget his Name; to disregard his Word; or to imitate the shameful Neutrality and Indifference of *Gallio*? Impressed with a Sense of this invariable and everlasting Kindness, surely, We shall declare Ourselves, as those Captives in *Babylon*, concerning their dear native City *Jerusalem*: *If I forget Thee, O blessed JESUS, let my Right-hand forget her Cunning; if I do not remember Thee, let my Tongue cleave to the Roof of my Mouth*.*

—————Remember Thee!

*Ay, my dear LORD, while Memory holds a Seat
In this devoted Breast—Remember Thee!*

*Yes, from the Table of my Memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond Records,
Which Youth and Observation copied there,
And thy Remembrance all alone shall live
Within the Book and Volume of my Brain†.*

Is it possible, *Theron*, for the Contemplation of such Goodness, to weaken the Motives, or relax the Springs of Obedience? As soon may *lenient Balms* kill, and rankest Poisons cure? Is such a Belief calculated to discourage Duty, and patronize Licentiousness? Just as much, as *vernal Showers* are fitted to cleave the Earth with Chinks, or Summer Suns to glaze the Waters with Ice.—When *Anthony* made an Oration to the Soldiers, on Occasion of *Cæsar's* Death; when He shewed them their honour'd Master's Robe, transfix'd with so many Dag-

gers;

* Psal. cxxxvii. 5, 6.

† SHAKESPEAR.

gers; when He reminded them of the Victories they had won, under their assassinated Commander; when He farther informed them, that their murdered General had remembered them in his Will—had bequeathed all his fine Gardens, and beautiful Walks, to their Use and Delight;—Heavens! How they took Fire! *Revenge* sparkled in their Eyes: *Revenge* flamed in their Bosoms: *Revenge* was all their Cry. They flew to the Houses of the Conspirators; laid them even with the Ground; and had they met with the Owners, would have tore them Limb from Limb.—Some such Resentment against Sin, will a Sense of our adored REDEEMER's Sufferings excite. Especially, when set home by his Blessed SPIRIT, and considered in Connection with those detestable Iniquities, which caused them; and with those invaluable Blessings, which were procured by them.—Nothing, nothing is so effectual, to beget the most irreconcilable Abhorrence of all Ungodliness; to make the Remembrance of it, bitter as Wormwood; the Temptations to it, horrible as Hell.

Let me remind You of an Incident, related by your favourite Historian *Xenophon*.—*Cyrus* had taken captive the young Prince of *Armenia*, together with his beautiful and blooming Princess; whom He had lately married, and of whom He was passionately fond. When both were brought to the Tribunal, *Cyrus* asked the Prince; what He would give, to be reinstated in his Kingdom?—He answered, with an Air of Indifference; “That, as for his Crown, and “his own Liberty, He valued them at a very low “Rate. But, if *Cyrus* would restore his beloved

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“ Princess, to her native Dignity and hereditary Possessions, He should infinitely rejoice; and would pay (this He uttered with Tenderness and Ardour) “ would willingly *pay his Life* for the Purchase.”— Could such a Declaration, so highly endearing, alienate the Affections of the Princess, or induce Her to violate her Fidelity? Let her own Conduct answer the Query. When all the Prisoners were dismissed with Freedom, it is impossible to express, how much they were charmed with their royal Benefactor. Some celebrated his martial Accomplishments. Some applauded his social Virtues. All were *prodigal* of their Praises, and *lavish* in grateful Acknowledgments. And You, said the Prince, (addressing himself to his Bride) what think You of *Cyrus*?—I did not observe Him, replied the Princess.—Not observe Him! Upon what then was your Attention fixed?—Upon that *dear* and *generous* Man, who declared, “ He would purchase my Liberty, at the Expence of his very Life*.”— Was her Heart impressed, were all her Thoughts ingrossed by that benevolent *Offer*? And shall ours be less affected with the incomparably more tender and endearing Love of *CHRIST*?—He was not only willing, but *actually* laid down his Life for Us; a Life immensely precious, and of higher Dignity than all Heavens.—He laid down his Life, not for amiable Persons, or worthy Creatures, but for vile Earth, and miserable Sinners.—*Purchasing* thereby for Us and our Children, Privileges of inestimable Worth, and of everlasting Duration.

Will

* Εἶω μὲν καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς παραμυνην ὥστε μηποτε λαλῆσαι ταύτην.
XENOPH. *de Cyri Instit.* Lib. III.

Will not such Beneficence, so unmerited, so unequalled, win * the most reluctant, and melt the most obdurate Heart? The Heart, which is not wrought upon by this Miracle of Divine Compassion, must be Steel, must be Adamant; quite impenetrable, and absolutely incorrigible.—“ O Thou ever Blessed, thou All-gracious REDEEMER, *thy Love to Us is wonderful; passing, I will not say, the Love of Women* †, but the Power of Language, and the Reach of Thought! Who can hold out against such charming Attractives? Who can resist such heavenly Goodness?—Only let a *Sense* of thy Love be always warm, always operative on our Minds. This shall be instead of a thousand Arguments to engage, instead of ten thousand Motives to quicken our Obedience.”—Other Motives may produce some external Services, or hypocritical Per-

form-

* *Beneficia*, says one of the Antients, *qui invenit, Compedes invenit*. Which fine Sentiment may almost serve as a Comment, on the beautiful and tender Declaration of GOD by his Prophet *Hosea*; *I drew them to Obedience with Cords of a Man, with Bands of Love*. Chap. xi. 4. HE who made, and intimately knows our Frame, knew that these Motives would be most powerful in Operation; most powerful on Creatures, capable of Love, and susceptible of Gratitude. Therefore He calls them, *The Cords of a Man*.—And if a Deliverance from temporal Bondage, if the Settlement of *Israel* in all the Plenty of *Canaan*, constituted so sweet an Incitement to Duty; doubtless, the everlasting Benefits mentioned by *Aspasio*, together with all the endearing Circumstances of their Procurement, must be abundantly more engaging.—May the SPIRIT from on High rend the *Veil* of Ignorance and Insensibility! Let into our Hearts the Knowledge and Faith of these great evangelical Truths! We shall then want no farther Demonstration, either of the Propriety of the Remark, or the Efficacy of the Principles.

† 2 Sam. i. 26.

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formances. Terrors may extort the Drudgery of the Hand. Bribes may purchase the Adulation of the Tongue. But this conciliates the Will; this profelytes the Affections; this captivates the very Soul; and makes all its Powers *like the Chariots of Amminadib* *, ready, expedite, and active in Duty.

Hear the holy Apostle, giving an Account of Himself and his spiritual State. He speaks in Language somewhat similar, though greatly superior, to the Profession of the *Armenian* Princesses.—“ So great is the Glory, so rich is the Grace, so superabundant are the Merits of my REDEEMER, *that I am determined to know nothing but CHRIST JESUS and Him crucified* †.—Ask the same zealous Apostle; *What* prompted Him to such indefatigable Diligence, and animated him with such invincible Fortitude? *Why* did He decline no Toil, and dread no Danger; rejoice in Tribulation, and glory in Reproach ‡; welcome Persecution, and defy Death?

This

* Cant. vi. 12.

† 1 Cor. ii. 2.

‡ That supreme Affection to the blessed JESUS, which reigned in the Hearts of his primitive Disciples, could never have been so emphatically displayed by any Strokes of Eloquence, as by their own chearful and heroic Manner of expressing themselves, with relation to their Sufferings.—Far from regretting, *I take pleasure* (says the Apostle) *in Afflictions*; and embrace them, when occurring in my Divine MASTER's Service, with a real Complacency, *videlicet*. 2 Cor. xii. 10.—*To you*, adds the same Apostle, and speaks in a congratulatory Strain, *it is given* (*εχαρισθη*) as a desirable and distinguished Privilege, *to suffer in behalf of CHRIST*. Philip. i. 29.—St. Luke, recording the abusive and cruel Outrages, committed on two Disciples, for preaching boldly in the Name of JESUS, uses a Phrase remarkably gallant and spirited; *They departed from the Council rejoicing, ὅτι ἡμετέρας ἀμωμονῆαι, that they were counted worthy to suffer*

This is his Reply; "*The Love of CHRIST constraineth * me*; beareth me on, with much the same strong, steady, prevailing Influence, which Winds and Tide exert, when they waft the Vessel, to its destined Harbour."

Shall we hear what another Disciple, one of the most advanced Proficients in Divine Love, says upon the Subject? One who learned his Knowledge, not in the School of Philosophy, but on his SAVIOUR's Bosom. *This is the Love of GOD, that we walk after his Commandments †*. This is the natural Fruit, this the certain Evidence, of Love to that glorious, transcendent, and adorably merciful BEING. What? Not that We supinely neglect, much less that We profanely violate, his sacred Precepts; but that with Assiduity and Delight, We make them the Rule of our Conduct.—*Charity edifieth ‡*: this Divine Love, far from razing the Foundations, far from demolishing the Structure, *buildeth up* || the fair Fabric of universal Godliness.

Let me borrow an Illustration from your own Letter. When a Pebble is cast into the smooth Canal, it moves the Center, and forms a Circle. The first creates a second: the second breaks into a third: they

suffer Shame; had the Honour of being vilified and reproached, in a Cause so highly venerable.—This Passage is a fine Exemplification of the Figure, which Rhetoricians style *Oxymorum*. Horace's—*Dulce Periculum—Splendidè mendax—Quo beatus Vulnere*—read flat, and look dim, upon the Comparison. *Acts* v. 41.

* Could You station a Coward, in the Midst of a numerous Army advancing to the Battle; or rather, could you place a Boat on the impetuous Cataracts of the Nile? You would see what is meant by the significant Word,

overwhelm. 2 Cor. v. 14.

† 2 John ver. 6.

‡ 1 Cor. viii. 1.

|| *Oxymorism*

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they continue to multiply and expand themselves, till the whole Surface is covered with circular Undulations. Thus, the Love of an All-gracious REDEEMER *, when *shed abroad in the Soul by the HOLY GHOST* †, will diffuse itself through every intellectual Faculty, and extend to every Species of Duty. Till the whole Heart is filled with the Image,

and

* I cannot but think, the Reasoning is much more just, and the Principle much more efficacious, in *Aspasio's* Manner of stating the Affair, than in the following famous Lines :

*Self-love but serves the virtuous Mind to wake,
As the small Pebble stirs the peaceful Lake :
The Center mov'd, a Circle strait succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads.
Friend, Parent, Neighbour, first it will embrace,
His Country next, and next all human Race :
Wide and more wide th' O'erflowings of the Mind
Take every Creature in of every Kind.*

Self-love too often acts on the Affections, as a Blast on the Leaves, *shrivels* and *contracts* them. But the Love of CHRIST, like a vernal Sun on the tender Buds, *opens*, and *expands* them ; till they become wide, as the Extent of his gracious Redemption ; wide as the Compass of his rational Creation.—By Self-love I am almost necessarily determined to *malign* the Persons, who cross my Inclinations, and obstruct my Interests. From the Love of CHRIST, I have a cogent Reason, and a most prevailing Inducement to love my very *Enemies*.—How does St. Peter analyze this Subject ? Not in Mr. Pope's, not in Lord Bolingbroke's Method *Godliness*, or a supreme Love to GOD reconciled in CHRIST, He represents as the Root or *Trunk* : then *brotherly Kindness*, or an affectionate Regard to Relations, Friends, Fellow-Christians, as some of the grand and master *Branches* : after this *Charity*, or a diffusive Good-will to all Mankind, as the Spread of *Boughs*, which complete and adorn the Tree. 2 Pet. i. 7.

† Rom. v. 5.

and the whole Behaviour regulated by the Law of the Blessed GOD.—So that I am persuaded, there is a great deal of Truth and Solidity, as every One must acknowledge, there is a peculiar Spirit and Beauty, in the Apostrophe of our Poet ;

Talk they of Morals ? O thou bleeding Love !

Thou Maker of new Morals to Mankind,

The grand Morality is Love of THEE.*

You mentioned the *Loadstone*, as most signally and most extensively serviceable in the sea-faring Business. Such is *Faith*, so efficacious, in practical *Christianity*.—This, perhaps, you think a scanty and defective Principle. The Property of turning to the polar Star, and pointing out the northern Part of the World, may seem equally mean and inconsiderable. But as the one is the very Soul of Navigation, the other is the very Life of Holiness.—It is somewhat like the Stone, which the *Babylonian Monarch* saw in his Dream, *cut from the Rock without Hands* †. Which, though despicable to human Appearance, was mighty in Operation ; destroyed the superb Statue ; became a great Mountain, and filled the whole Earth. Thus will Faith exert its kindly, yet triumphant Energy ; to every Corruption, that it may be subdued ; to every Virtue, that it may be cherished.

Faith is a real Persuasion, founded on GOD's Word, and wrought by his SPIRIT, that the Blessed JESUS has shed his Blood for my Sins ; has fulfilled all Righteousness in my Stead ; and obtained eternal Redemption for me ‡.

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* Night-Thoughts, N^o IV. † Dan. ii. 34.

‡ This Definition of *Faith* may possibly, at the first View, dissatisfy and alarm even some pious People ; implying,

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When the ALMIGHTY sunk the Cavities of the Ocean, and replenished them with the liquid Element, He provided an inexhaustible Source of Moisture, for the Refreshment of every Animal, and the Nutriment of every Vegetable. In like manner, where-ever He works this true Faith, He plants the Seed of *universal* Holiness, and provides for the Propagation of *every* Virtue. This Persuasion of the Divine Good-will, pacifies Conscience, and fills the Soul with Admiration, Gratitude, and Joy. This Discovery of our Pardon and perfect Reconciliation in the Blessed JESUS, overcomes our natural Enmity, and excites a fervent Desire to please our most merciful FATHER. In short; this Experience, and these Views, of the abundant Grace of GOD in CHRIST, attract and assimilate the Soul; turning it into his amiable Likeness *, “as the Wax is turned to the imprinted “Seal.”—What will be the Language of such a Person?

“Did my exalted MASTER empty Himself
“and become poor, that his most unworthy Ser-
“vant might be *filled with all the Fulness of GOD* †?
“And shall not I chearfully deny myself the expen-
“five Pleasures of the World, that I may have
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lying, as they apprehend, too great a Degree of *Assurance*. But if they please to take it in *Connection*, with the Explanation and Adjustment, delivered in the *Sixteenth Dialogue*, I hope, all Cause of Disapprobation or surprise will vanish. I flatter myself, that the Sentiment will be found, not only comfortable for the Sinner, but agreeable to Scripture; and truly *unexceptionable*, as well as highly *desirable*.

* 2 Cor. iii. 18.

† Eph. iii. 19.

" somewhat to bestow on his needy Children?—
 " Has the Death of *CHRIST*, as a Punishment,
 " satisfied the most rigorous Justice for my Sins?
 " As a Price, has it ransomed me from the dreadful
 " Damnation of Hell? As a Sacrifice, has it made
 " my Peace with *GOD* Most High? Shall I not
 " then, by these *Mercies* of my dying *LORD*, shall
 " I not be induced to present all the Members of
 " my Body, and all the Faculties of my Soul, as a
 " *living Sacrifice* * to his Honour?—Do I believe,
 " that my *SAVIOUR* has not only redeemed me
 " from the Curse, but established my Title to all
 " the *Blessings* included in the Promises, and all the
 " *Felicity* laid up in Heaven? And can I neglect to
 " seek those invaluable Blessings, or forbear to
 " aspire after this immense Felicity? Can I be so
 " *ungrateful* as to affront, so *insensible* as to forget,
 " the infinitely beneficent *AUTHOR* of both?
 " —Am I persuaded, that the *PRINCE* of Peace
 " is entered into Glory as my *Forerunner* †, and has
 " prepared Mansions of Bliss for my final Recep-
 " tion? And shall I not follow Him thither, in my
 " Hopes and my Affections? Be as a Pilgrim be-
 " low, and have my Conversation above?—Is not
 " this a most sweet and effectual Method of gain-
 " ing my Heart? If my Heart, then all my Powers,
 " to his blessed Self, and sacred Service?"

Such, my dear *Theron*, will be the *Effects* of Faith.
 Therefore, it is not in vain, much less to the Dis-
 couragement of real Virtue, that the Scripture lays
 such a Stress upon Faith: so frequently urges the
 Importance and Necessity of Faith: represents Faith,
 as the principal Work of the Divine *SPIRIT*, and
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* Rom. xii. 1.

† Heb. vi. 20.

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the great Instrument of Salvation. Because it is a sure, a sovereign Means of *purifying the Heart**, and never fails to *work by Love*†.—Was Faith, as some People are apt to imagine, like a Candle put under a Bushel, or like the Lamps which burn in Sepulchres; it would then be an insignificant Labour to inculcate it, and no better than an empty Flourish of Words, to celebrate it. But we are infallibly assured, that Faith is a *vital, an operative, a victorious Principle*.

CHRIST is a Store-house of all Good. Whatever is necessary to remove our Guilt, whatever is expedient for renewing our Nature, whatever is proper to fit Us for the eternal Fruition of GOD, all this is laid up in *CHRIST*. And all this is received by Faith, for Application, Use, and Enjoyment.—Faith therefore is a living Principle of Holiness, because it possesses *CHRIST*, and Life in Him. Even as it is a sure Means of Justification because it receives *CHRIST*, and Righteousness in Him.—It is likewise as impossible, for the Sun to be in his meridian Sphere, and not to diffuse Light; as for this Faith to be exercised on *CHRIST*, and not to purify the Conscience and sanctify the Temper.

When *Zaccheus* BELIEVED, He became a new Man: his Bowels yearned with Compassion: the rapacious Publican was a Friend to the Needy, and a Father to the Poor‡.—When the *Macedonians* BELIEVED, how eminently was their Spirit ennobled, and their Practice improved! Though pressed with Affliction, their Souls overflowed with Joy; and even in the deepest Poverty, they signalized

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them-

* Acts xv. 9.

† Gal. v. 6.

‡ Luke xix. 8.

themselves by the Abundance of their Liberality*. —When the *first Converts* BELIEVED, the Change in their Behaviour was so remarkable, the Holiness of their Lives so exemplary; that they won the Favour, and commanded the Respect, of all the People †.—In short; when Faith takes place, and *CHRIST* is applied, *the Wilderness buds, and the Desert blossoms as a Rose. The lame Man leaps like a Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb sings. Old Things are passed away, behold all Things are become new.*

That my dear *Theron* may be *established* in Faith, may *increase* in Faith, may *abound* in Faith, is the most affectionate Wish, which Thought can suggest, or Friendship adopt. May his Faith therefore be established like the Mountain-Oaks; increase like the progressive Stream; till it spreads and abounds like the all-overflowing Flood ‡!

I intended to have closed my Letter, and confirmed my Point, by a *very memorable* Story. But however your Patience may persevere, my Time fails, and my Hand is weary. The next Post, if nothing unexpected intervenes, shall bring You the Sequel.

* *Cor. viii. 2.* Here is, especially in the Original, as fine an *Antithesis*, perhaps, as ever was penned. Since the preceding Notes are so copious, I shall deny myself the Pleasure of particularizing the Beauties of this Clause. I leave it to the Lover of sacred Literature, to admire the Apostle's Expression, to be charmed with the Spirit of the *Macedonian* Believers, and to derive from both, Edification mixed with Delight.

† *Acts ii. 47.*

‡ These Images We may venture to style *beautiful*, because they are borrowed from the Apostle; *ἡ δὲ πόλις αὐτῶν ὡς ἡ ἐρημία* Col. ii. 7. *ὡρεὶται ὡς ὡρεὶται* Phil. i. 25. *ὡς ὡρεὶται ὡς ὡρεὶται* 2 Theff. i. 3.

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Let. II. ASPASIO to THERON. 229

Sequel. May it, when brought to my Friend, be as a *Nail fastened in a sure Place*, and give the Rivet of Conviction to all these important Truths!—In the mean Time, or rather at all Times, I remain

Cordially and invariably Yours,

ASPASIO.



LETTER XI.

ASPASIO to THERON.

Dear THERON,

FAITH in the Righteousness* of JESUS CHRIST is a fundamental Principle, in that invaluable System of sacred and divine Philosophy—THE GOSPEL. By which the Heavenly TEACHER is continually training up Millions of rational and immortal Creatures, for the true Perfection of their Nature; for the final Fruition of their GOD; or, in other Words, for a State of consummate Happiness and everlasting Glory.—In this School, may You and I be humble *Students*, and daily *Proficients*! While Others are ambitious of glittering Distinctions, and sounding Titles, may it be our highest Aim, to answer the Character—of BELIEVERS! By this Character, the Supreme LORD distinguishes his chosen People, and denominates the

P 3

Heirs

* ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΕΝ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΥ ΠΡΩΤΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ, ΙΗΣΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ. 2 Pet. i. 1.

Heirs of Salvation.—This Character stands fairest in the Book of Life, and most conspicuous in the Annals of Eternity.—This Character, however neglected or disesteemed among Men, will be remembered and had in Honour, when the pompous Names of *Statesman* and *Generalissimo* are known no more.

As Faith is of such singular and extensive Efficacy in genuine Christianity, methinks, I would have all our Meditations *terminate* on its glorious Object, and be calculated to *invigorate* so beneficial a Principle.—And so much the rather, as too many of our ingenious Writers run vastly wide of this Mark.—They teach Us to admire the Magnitude and Distances of the Planets; the annual and diurnal Revolutions of the Globe. They call up our most pleased Attention to the exact Arrangement, the exquisite Construction, and most curious Operation, of every Wheel and every Implement, in the Machine of Nature. At the same Time, they more than intimate, that this is the brightest Mirrour, wherein We may contemplate the divine Perfections. This the Scene of Order, from whence We may derive the best Rules, for harmonizing the human Mind. Hence they would animate our Devotion, and hence regulate our Life. Not without apparent Neglect, I fear, with supercilious Contempt, of that most illustrious Discovery of the divine Excellencies; which was exhibited to the Children of Men, by GOD manifested in the Flesh. Thus they discard the Gospel, and would supplant the blessed JESUS; making the Universe their Bible, and Nature *their Wisdom, their Sanctification, their Redemption.*

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But, blessed be GOD, We have not so learned Philosophy. We can place her at the Foot-stool, not on the Throne of her LORD; and bid her proclaim his Honours, not usurp his Office. Let Us, therefore, when we reflect on that stupendous Act, the Creation of the World out of Nothing; let Us remember, it was *HIS* Act, who *obtained eternal Redemption for Sinners*. When we contemplate that immense Theatre of Wonders, the Heavens and their shining Hosts; let Us not forget, that they are all *HIS* Work, who *brought in everlasting Righteousness* for the Ungodly.—Do We turn our Thoughts to the Ocean, that spacious and magnificent Canal, which covers more than half the Globe? It was formed by *HIS* Word, and is obedient to *HIS* Will, who *loved Us, and washed Us from our Sins in his own Blood*. Do We take a View of the Earth, that grand and inexhaustible Magazine, which furnishes such a Multiplicity of Conveniencies, for so many Millions of Creatures? It is all *HIS* Property, and wholly at *HIS* Disposal, who *emptied * Himself* for our Sake, and *had not where to lay his Head*.—For thus saith the inspired Philosopher; thus saith the Oracle of Revelation; *All Things were made BY Him, and FOR Him †*.

The great CREATOR has *enriched* this habitable Globe with a Profusion of Good. He has *adorned* it with a Variety, a Regularity, and a Beauty, which are perfectly charming. He has *ennobled* it with a Dignity, a Sublimity, and a Grandeur, which are at once delightful and astonishing. In all this, Reason cannot but discern a clear Manifestation of Power, a bright Display of Wisdom, and a rich

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* ΕΚΕΧΩΣΕΝ ΕΑΥΤΟΝ. Phil. ii. 7.

† Col. i. 16.

Demonstration of Benignity.—But will the CREATOR himself vouchsafe to be made Flesh; on Purpose that He may *bleed* and *die* for his Guilty Creatures? This is what, neither the utmost Penetration of Men, nor the very superior Intelligence of Angels, could ever have demonstrated, discovered, or conceived. This exceeds, whatever the Elements have produced, whatever the Sun has beheld; as much as the Extent and Magnificence of the planetary System, exceeds the Dimensions and the Furniture of a Shepherd's Hut.—To reveal this, is the blessed Peculiarity of the Gospel. To know and believe this, is the distinguishing Prerogative of a Christian. To *apply* this, to *dwell* upon this, to *connect* this with all our Observations of the Universe, should be the favourite and habitual Employ of the Believer. This will improve Wonder into Devotion, and raise the Entertainments of Science into the Joy of Salvation. This will render every philosophical Speculation a Strengtheners of our Faith; and make the various Scenes of Nature, a Guide to Grace, and a Step to Glory.—When this is done, then all Things attain their proper End; and as they are *by CHRIST*, so they are *for CHRIST*.

But I forget myself; my Business, and my Promise. I am to establish the Point by incontestable Fact, not to embellish it by loose Harangue. With Pleasure I address myself to discharge the Obligation; and exemplify, in a very memorable Instance, the *Power* of Faith on *religious* Practice.—From whence shall I fetch my Exemplification! From the Memoirs of the Apostle of the Gentiles? Here I find one, most concisely, and at the same Time most forcibly displayed,

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Observe this Man in his unconverted State. He *breathes out Threatnings and Slaughter* against the Christians. Can any Thing denote a more iniquitous and savage Temper? The roaring Lion, and the ranging Bear, are gentle Creatures, compared with this Monster in human Shape.—Still the Description of his Barbarity heightens. *I was exceedingly mad against them; I compelled them to blaspheme; and punished them in every Synagogue.* The Practice, not of a Man, but of a Fiend! 'Tis the very Picture of an incarnate Devil.—What has this infernal Wretch, that may recommend Him to the divine Favour? If ever there was a Sinner on Earth, that had sinned beyond the Reach of Mercy, beyond the Possibility of Pardon, surely it must be this *Saul of Tarsus*.

But the divine Mercy, disdaining all Limits, is overflowing and unmeasurable. Where Sin has abounded like a Flood, divine Mercy abounds like an Ocean. The Favour of Man is backward to interpose, till something amiable or inviting appears in the Object. But the Grace of GOD is immensely rich and infinitely free. It prevents the most vile and hardened Rebels. It brings every Requisite and Recommendation, in its own unspeakably beneficent Nature. It accomplishes all its blessed Ends, not by any towardly Disposition in the Sinner, but by that one glorious Righteousness provided in the SAVIOUR.—This overtook the Persecutor on his Journey to *Damascus*. Light and Life were poured upon Him, not from any Dawn of Reformation in Himself, but from a very different Quarter. By opening, as it were, a Window in Heaven, while He was sojourning even in the Suburbs
of

of Hell. *He saw that JUST ONE.* He received the inestimable Gift. He was made Partaker of the Salvation, which is in JESUS CHRIST.

See, now, what *Effect* this Faith has upon his Conduct. It causes a total Revolution in the Sentiments of his Mind. It gives a new Bias to every Faculty of his Soul. It introduces an absolute Change into the whole Tenour of his Behaviour. As great and marvelous a Change, as if You should behold some mighty Torrent, turned by the Shock of an Earthquake; and rolling those Waters to the East, which, from the Beginning of Time, had flowed incessantly to the West. He adores that JESUS, whom He lately blasphemed. He preaches that Faith, which He once destroyed. And He is ready to lay down his Life for those Believers, whom not long ago He persecuted unto Death.

It may be said; Is the Change as *lasting*, as it is surprising? We will only consider the converted *Saul*, in one very remarkable Point of Light.—*After these Things were ended, says the sacred Historian, Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome* *.—Who can observe, and not admire, this plain unambitious Manner of relating a Series of Labours, the most signally successful, and the most extensively useful? Nothing in human Conduct ever surpassed the *Greatness* of the one, and perhaps nothing in historical Composition ever equaled the *Simplicity* of the Other.

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* Acts xix. 21.

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St. Paul had already reduced *Ephesus* and *Asia* to the Obedience of *CHRIST*. He had already brought *Macedonia* and *Achaia* into Subjection to the Gospel. He had long ago erected the Standard, and spread the Triumphs of Christianity, in the Regions of *Arabia*. Yet, as if He had hitherto atchieved nothing, He bends his Forces towards *Jerusalem*. Then he marks out *Rome* for the Seat of his spiritual Warfare. After this, he forms the same beneficent Design upon *Spain*: including, in his comprehensive Plan, the Metropolis and the Boundaries* of the known World.—The Universe is but just large enough, to be the Scene of his Activity and Zeal; He never discontinues the *charitable Campaign*, but with the last Breath of his Life; and He speaks of this unintermitted Course of arduous and dangerous Services, as if He was only going to make some friendly *Visit*, or join in a Party of innocent *Pleasure*; *After I have been at Jerusalem, I must also see Rome* †.

Which

* *Spain* was then supposed to be the Boundary of the *Western*, as the *Ganges* was reckoned the Extremity of the *Eastern* World.

*Omnibus in Terris quæ sunt a Gadibus usque
Auroram & Gangen.*

Juv. Sat. X.

† I am quite charmed, I must confess, with this very *simple*, but incomparably *gallant* Manner of the Apostle's speaking. Far beyond all the Pomp of Panegyric, it displays the Hero.

When a Handful of *Spartans* undertook to defend the Pass of *Thermopylæ*, against the whole Army of *Persia*; so prodigious, it was reported, were the Multitudes of the *Persians*, that the very Flight of their Arrows would intercept the Shining of the Sun. Then, said *Dieneces* one of the *Spartan* Leaders, *We shall have the Advantage of fighting*

Which of your *Alexanders*, which of your *Cæsars*, which of all the Heroes renowned in *Grecian* or *Roman* Story, can vie with the Zeal and Magnanimity of this poor, despised Tent-maker? So poor, that he

fighting in the Shade.—Just before the Battle of *Agincourt*, News was brought to King *Henry's* Camp, that the *French* were exceedingly numerous. That they would bring into the Field, more than six times the Number of the *English* Troops. To which the brave Captain *Gam* immediately replied, *Is it so? Then there are enough to be cut in Pieces, enough to be taken Prisoners, and enough to run away*.—A commanding Officer, I think, among the Royalists, being besieged by the parliamentary Forces, was summoned to surrender the Castle. The Summons He rejected. Upon which, the Enemy threatened, that, if He persisted in his Resolution, the Walls should, without farther Delay, be battered to the Ground. *What if they are?* was his blunt Answer, *I am not obliged to rebuild them*.—Sir *Thomas More*, sometime Lord Chancellor of England, fell into Disgrace with his Sovereign, and was committed to the Tower. On which Occasion, the Lieutenant of the Tower made an Apology for the Diet, Lodging, and Accommodations, as unsuitable to the Dignity of so great a Man. *No Apology, Sir*, replies the courtly Prisoner: *I don't question, but I shall like your Accommodations very well. And if You once hear me complain, I give You free Leave to turn me out of Doors*.

Such calm Sentiments, so cool and sedate a Temper, amidst Circumstances of the most imminent Danger or the greatest Distress, argue an uncommon Fortitude and Superiority of Mind. But, if We consider the Nature of the Apostle's Enterprize; that it was nothing less than an open Attack on the Empire of Satan; a declared War against the whole idolatrous World; all which was to commence in Reproach and Persecution; was to be attended with Bonds and Afflictions; was to end in Martyrdom and Death.—If We consider this, I believe, nothing will appear, at once so humble and so exalted, so modest yet so magnanimous, as the Turn and Air of his Expression; *After I have been at Jerusalem, I must also see Rome*.

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he was constrained to work with his own Hands, for a Morsel of Bread : so *despised*, that He was frequently treated as the Offscouring of all Things. Notwithstanding all these Discouragements, what did he not attempt, what did He not accomplish * for the Honour of his MASTER, and the Good of his Fellow-creatures ?—He embarks in a Shallop ; He has neither Shield nor Spear ; yet he purposes to command the Ocean, and conquer the Globe. What *Greatness* of Soul was here ! He expects † nothing but Poverty, Contempt, and Death ; yet his Heart is big with the Hope of enriching, ennobling, and saving Ages and Generations. What *Benevolence* of Temper was this !—Should you inquire, concerning this illustrious Champion of the Cross ; *Who* were his potent Auxiliaries ? None but the Divine SPIRIT.—*What* were his mighty Weapons ? Nothing but the Word of Truth and Grace.—*Whence* proceeded his intrepid, his enterprizing, his all-conquering Resolution ? Only from Faith, a lively Faith in JESUS CHRIST.

This, I think, is a sufficient Confirmation of my Doctrine.—Nevertheless I have another Instance to produce. One that was exhibited in an Age, when the glorious Object of our Faith shone with dim Lustre, and with distant Beams. Yet it may justly
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* Ω τὸ μεγαλοπράγμονος ἀνθρώπου, said King *Agésilais*, when He saw *Epaminondas*, the *Spartan* Hero, marching at the Head of his Troops. But never was there a human Character, whom this high Encomium so exactly suited, as the Character and Conduct of the Apostle *Paul*. Of Him it will be said, and throughout all Generations, *What bath GOD wrought by this Man !*

† Acts xx. 23.

be admired, and will hardly be eclipsed, by the most inlightened among the *Christian* Saints.—To keep You no longer in Suspence, the Case I mean, is that which *Moses* records, and the Apostle celebrates. BY FAITH *Abraham*, when he was tried, offered up *Isaac*: and He that had received the Promises, offered up his only begotten Son *.—As this is so singular an Example of the efficacious and triumphant Operation of Faith; unequaled in any Nation of the World, or under any Dispensation of Religion; You will give me leave to dwell a little on some of its marvelous Circumstances.

Abraham was an eminent and distinguished Servant of the Most High GOD. Favoured with peculiar Manifestations of the Divine Will, and dignified with the honourable Title of his MAKER's Friend †. Yet even this Man, is harassed with a long Succession of Troubles; and, which was reckoned in those Ages the most deplorable Calamity, goes childless ‡.

Long He waits, worshiping GOD with the most patient Resignation. At length, an Oracle from the

* Heb. xi. 17.

† 2 Chron. xx. 7. Isai. xli. 8.

‡ There was so much Gall in this Calamity, that it embittered every other Species of Happiness. Visited by this Affliction, the Patriarch could taste no Joy in his late signal Victory; all his worldly Prosperity was insipid; and he seems to have been incapable of relishing any other Comfort; *What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?* Gen. xv. 2.—I would intreat the Reader to take particular Notice of this Circumstance. It will have the same Effect upon the Representation of *Abraham's* Obedience, and the whole Series of his Difficulties, as a magnifying Glass has upon the Objects to which it is applied.

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the LORD gives Him Hope, gives Him Assurance of a Son. Joyfully he receives the Promise, and rests in humble Expectation of its Accomplishment. —Several Years run their Rounds, but no pleasing Infant prattles in his Arms, or is dandled upon his Knees. At last, the Handmaid becomes pregnant. But what a *Disappointment* was here ! This is the Son of the Bondwoman, not of the free.

How afflicting the Case of this excellent Person ! His Kinsfolk and Acquaintance see their Olive-branches, flourishing round about their Tables. Even his ungodly Neighbours have Children at their Desire, and leave the Residue of their Substance for their Babes. But *Abraham*, the Worshiper of JEHOVAH, the Favourite of Heaven —this *Abraham* is destitute of an Heir, to support his Name, to propagate his Family, or to inherit the Blessing.—O the Straits ! to which the Believer is sometimes reduced ! How does a sovereign Providence try his Faith, as it were in a Furnace of Fire ! Not that it may be consumed, but refined, and come forth with augmented Lustre ; to the Praise of *ever-faithful, all-sufficient* Grace.

GOD is pleased to renew the Grant, and assure Him more explicitly, That *Sarah* shall have a Son. But this Notice comes at a very late Period in Life ; when *Sarah* is advanced in Years, and too old, according to the Course of Nature, to conceive. However, the pious Patriarch *staggers not through Unbelief* ; but *hopes even against Hope* *.—Is it improbable ? Is it difficult ? Nay, is it to all human Appearance impossible ? So much the more proper, for Faith to expect, and for Omnipotence to accomplish.

At

At last, the Gift, so earnestly desired, is vouchsafed. *Sarah* has a *Child*—a *Son*—an *Isaac*. One who should be a Source of Consolation and Delight to his Parents ; should *fill their Mouth with Laughter* *, and *their Tongue with Joy*.—With tender Care, doubtless, this pleasant Plant is reared. Many Prayers are put up, for his long Life, and great Happiness. The fond Parents watch over Him, as over the Apple of their own Eye. *Their* Life is bound up in the Life of the Lad †.—He grows in Grace, as he grows in Stature. So amiable is his Temper, and so engaging his Behaviour, as could not fail of endearing him even to a Stranger ; how much more to such indulgent Parents, after so long a State of Barrenness, and so many Expectations so frequently frustrated.

Now, methinks, we are ready to congratulate the happy Sire ; and flatter Ourselves, that his Tribulations have an End. That the Storms, which ruffled the Noon of Life, are blown over ; and the Evening of his Age, is becoming calm and serene.—But *let not Him that girdeth on his Harness, boast Himself, as He that putteth it off* ‡. Our Warfare on Earth is never accomplished, till We bow our Head, and give up the Ghost. The sharpest, the severest Trial is still behind.

Abraham § ; says GOD—*Abraham* knows the Voice. It is the Voice of condescending Goodness.

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* *Psal.* cxxvi. 2. This is the Import of the Hebrew Name *Isaac*.

† *Gen.* xlv. 30.

‡ *1 Kings* xx. 11.

§ The Sentence, with which the inspired Historian introduces this affecting Narrative, is unhappily translated in our Bibles ; *נִסָּה אֶת אַבְרָהָם* GOD did tempt *Abraham*.

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He had often heard it with a Rapture of Delight.—Instantly He replies, “*Here I am. Speak, LORD; for thy Servant is all Attention.*” Hoping, no doubt, to receive some fresh Manifestation of the divine *Good-will*, to Himself and his Family; or some new Discovery of the Method, in which the divine *Wisdom* would accomplish the Promises, *I will multiply thy Seed—I will make thy Seed as the Dust of the Earth.—In thy Seed shall all the Families of the Earth be blessed.*

Take thy Son; adds GOD. And might not *Abraham* reasonably expect, that, since his Son was arrived to Years of Maturity, He should be directed, How to settle Him in the World with Honour and Advantage; Where to find a virtuous and fruitful Partner of his Cares, his Joys, and his Bed?—He is commanded, not barely to take his *Son*, but his *only Son*; his Son *Isaac*; whom He *loved*. How must these affecting Images awaken all that soft Complacency, and all that tender Triumph, which are known only to the fond feeling Apprehensions of a Parent! Must not such an Introduction, so remarkably endearing, heighten his Expectation of some signal Mercy, to be conferred on the beloved

VOL. III. Q Youth;

ham—This Expression seems, more than seems to clash with the Doctrine of St. *James*, Chap. i. ver. 13. And cannot but sound harsh to those Ears, which have been accustomed to understand by *Tempter* and *Tempting*, Persons utterly odious, and Practices extremely pernicious.—Whereas, the true and natural Signification of the Original is, He *tried* or *explored*. GOD sounded the Depth, and measured the Height of his Servant's Faith; in order to erect an everlasting Monument of the victorious Efficacy of this sacred Principle; and exhibit an illustrious Pattern to all them, who should hereafter believe.

Youth ; and would it not render the Blessing peculiarly acceptable, more than doubly welcome ?

Was he not then startled ? Was he not horribly amazed ? When, instead of some renewed Expression of the Divine Favour, He received the following Orders. *Take now thy Son—thy only Son—Isaac—whom Thou lovest—and get Thee into the Land of Moriah, and offer Him there for a Burnt-offering, upon one of the Mountains which I will tell thee of**. Was ever Description so affecting, or Message so alarming ? Does GOD create the Apple of the Eye, only to be a Sheath for the Dagger ? Does He impart the utmost Sensibility, only to inflict the most agonizing Pain ? Every Word in this Injunction, softens and entenders the Parent's Heart ; and, at the same Time, sharpens the Arrow, that must pierce it through and through.

Where now, *Abraham*, are all thy pleasing Prospects ? How often didst thou say, in thy enamoured and delighted Heart ; “ *This same shall comfort Us concerning our Trouble* †. Many have been my Sorrows ; but this Child, this dear Child, shall dry up my Tears, and bring me to my Grave, in Peace.”—Alas ! this lovely Flower is to be cut down, in its fairest fullest Bloom. All thy shining Hopes are overcast in a Moment. They are covered with Darkness and the Shadow of Death.—But let Us attend to the tragical Story.

Abraham, take thy Son.—Who, but *Abraham*, could have forbore remonstrating and pleading, on such an Occasion ?—*Ananias*, being charged with a Commission to *Saul* the Persecutor, takes upon Him to argue the Case with his Almighty SOVEREIGN.

LORD,

* Gen. xxii. 2.

† Gen. v. 29.

LORD, I have heard by Many concerning this Man, how much Evil He hath done to thy Saints at Jerusalem; and here He hath Authority from the chief Priests, to bind all that call upon thy Name *. It can never be safe or expedient, to present myself voluntarily before Him; who came hither breathing out Threatenings and Slaughter against me. What is this, but to court Danger; and run, with open Eyes, into Ruin?—Thus *Ananias*. With how much greater Appearance of Reason, might *Abraham* have replied?

“LORD, have I not already left my Country; left my Kindred; and, at thy Command, left my Father’s House? And wilt Thou now bereave me of my Child? Must I part, not with some admired Folly or darling Vanity, but with the most worthy Object of a rational Affection? Indeed with my only remaining Consolation?

“Shall I be deprived of my Child, almost as soon as I have received Him? Didst Thou give Him, only to tantalize thy Servant? Remember, gracious GOD, the Name he bears. How shall He answer its chearing Import? How shall He be a Source of Satisfaction to his Parents, or the Father of many Nations; if Thou takest Him away, in his unmarried State, and the very Prime of his Years?

“If Sin lies at the Door, let me *expiate* the Guilt. Let thousands of Rams, let every Bullock in my Stalls, bleed at thy Altar. My Wealth, most mighty LORD, and all my Goods, are *nothing* in comparison of my *Isaac*. Command me to be stript of my Possessions; command me

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“to

* Acts ix. 13, 14.

“ to roam, as a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the
 “ Earth ; and I will bless thy holy Name. Only
 “ let my Child, my dear Child, be spared.

“ Or, if nothing will appease thy Indignation
 “ but human Blood, let *my Death* be the Sacrifice.
 “ Upon me be the Vengeance. I am old and grey-
 “ headed. The best of my Days are past, and the
 “ best of my Services done. If this tottering Wall
 “ tumbles, there will be little, or no Cause for
 “ Regret. But, if the Pillar of my House, and
 “ the Support of my Family—if *He* be snatched
 “ from me, what Good will my Life do me ? *O my*
 “ *Son ! my Son ! would GOD I might die for Thee*.*

“ If it must be a blooming Youth, in the Flower
 “ of his Days, be pleased, most merciful GOD,
 “ to select the Victim from some *fruitful* Family.
 “ There are those, who abound in Children.
 “ Children are multiplied unto them ; and though
 “ many were removed, yet would their Table be
 “ full. There are those, who have Flocks and
 “ Herds ; whereas, I have only this one little
 “ Lamb † ; the very Solace of my Soul, and the
 “ Stay of my declining Years. And shall this be
 “ taken away, while all *those* are left ?”

Yes, *Abraham* ; it is *thy* Son, and not Another's,
 that is marked for the Victim.—What Distress, had
 He not been supported by Faith, what exquisite
 Distress must have overwhelmed this affectionate
 Parent ! How could He refrain from crying out,
 and with a Flood of Tears ?—“ If the Decree can-
 “ not be reversed ; if it must be the Fruit of my
 “ own Body ; O ! that *Ishmael*, the Son of the
 “ Handmaid—How shall I speak it ? My Heart
 “ bleeds

* 2 Sam. xviii. 33.

† 2 Sam. xii. 3.

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 “ saying—*He*

“ bleeds at the Thought ; at the Thought even of
 “ *his* expiring Agonies, and untimely Death. But
 “ as for *Isaac*, the Son of my beloved Spouse, the
 “ Son of my old Age, the Crown of all my La-
 “ bours—How shall I survive such a Loss ?

“ *My Bowels ! My Bowels ! I am pained at my*
 “ *very Heart*. If it was only to dismiss Him into
 “ some foreign Country, and not to see his Face
 “ for many Years ; even this would be a sore
 “ Tryal. But to lose Him by the Stroke of Death ;
 “ to have Him cut off out of the Land of the Liv-
 “ ing ! Will not the Blow that dispatches Him,
 “ be fatal to Us both ?

“ Yet, if He *must* die, and there is no Remedy ;
 “ may He not at least expire by a natural Dissolu-
 “ tion ? May not some common Distemper unloose
 “ the Cords of Life, and lay Him down gently in
 “ the Tomb ? May not his fond Mother and myself
 “ seal his closing Eyes, and soften his dying Pangs
 “ by our tender Offices ?”

No, *Abraham*. Thy Son must be *slaughtered* on
 the Altar. He shall have no other Bed of Death,
 than the Pile of hewn Wood ; no other Winding-
 sheet, than his own clotted Gore. The sacrificing
 Knife, and not any common Disease, shall bring
 Him to his End.—And think not to satisfy thy sor-
 rowing Fondness, by paying Him the last Honours
 of a decent Interment. It is the LORD's Will,
 that He be cut in Pieces ; consumed to Ashes ; and
 made a *Burnt-offering*. So that nothing shall re-
 main, to be preserved, or embalmed. It shall not
 be in thy Power to sooth thy Grief, by resorting to
 his Grave ; and weeping at his Sepulchre ; and
 saying—*Here lies Isaac*.

“ But if all must be executed ; GOD forbid,
 “ that I should, behold the dismal Tragedy ! If
 “ my *Isaac* must be bound Hand and Foot for the
 “ Slaughter ; if He must receive the Steel into his
 “ Bosom ; and welter in his own innocent Blood ;
 “ O ! let it be far, far from the Sight of these
 “ Eyes ! ”

Even this Mitigation cannot be granted. Thou, *Abraham*, thou thyself must stand by ; must look on ; must see Him slain.—Nay ; Thou must not only be an Eye-witness of his Agony, but be the *Executioner* of thy *Isaac*. Yes ; *thy* Hands must lift the deadly Weapon ; *thy* Hands must point it to the beloved Breast ; *thy own* Hands must urge its Way, through the gushing Veins, and the shivering Flesh, till it be plunged in the throbbing Heart. GOD will not permit the Work to be done by Another. The Father, the Father must be the Murtherer.

Is not the wretched Father *stunned* and *thunder-struck* ? Does He not stand fixed in Horror, and speechless with Grief. What Words can be mournful enough to express his Sorrows ?—To murder a Son ! Is it not impious, execrable, shocking ? Nature *recoils* at the very Thought ! How then can the best of Fathers perform the Deed ?

How shall He answer it to the Wife of his Bosom, the Mother of the lovely Youth ? Who bore Him in her Womb ; who brought Him forth with Pain ; and nursed Him up, amidst the fondest Caresses. Will She not have Reason to reproach *Abraham*, and say in the Anguish of her Spirit
*A bloody Husband hast thou been to me **.

* Exod. iv. 25.

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How can He justify it to the World? They will never be persuaded, that the GOD of Goodness can delight in Cruelty, or authorize so horrid an Action.—Will they not take up a *taunting* Proverb, and say at every Turn? “There goes the Man, “the Monster rather, that has imbrued his Hands “in the Blood of his own Son! This is He that “pretends to Piety; and yet could be so savage, “as to assassinate, coolly and deliberately assassinate “an only Child!”—Might not Thousands of such Considerations, crowd into his Thoughts, and rack his very Soul?

But GOD is unchangeable. Positive is his Word, and must be obeyed. Obeyed immediately too. Take *now* thy Son. The LORD's Command requireth Speed. No Time is to be lost, in bidding Adieu to his Relations, or in fruitless Supplications for revoking the Doom.—Prodigious Tryal! Was ever Precept like this Precept?—Yet, when JEHOVAH enjoins, to deliberate, is Disloyalty; to dispute, is Rebellion.

This the Patriarch knew. Therefore He waits not for a second Injunction.—He knew also, that Obedience is no Obedience, unless it be *willing* and *cheerful*. Therefore He consults not with Flesh and Blood. He is deaf to the Arguings of carnal Reason, and regards not the Yearnings of paternal Affection. But, without a murmuring Word, without a Moment's Delay, sets forward on his Journey. Not so much as betraying the least Uneasiness, to alarm his Wife; nor heaving the least Sigh, to create Suspicion in his Attendants.

And canst thou, *Abraham*, canst thou persist in thy Purpose? Can thy Heart firmly resolve, can thy Hand

steadily execute? Execute this inexpressibly severe Task?—Is not this Child the Heir of the Promises, both temporal, spiritual, and eternal?—Is not the great MESSIAH, whose Day thou hast so passionately desired to see; whose Person is the Hope of all the Ends of the Earth; is not that great MESSIAH to spring from his Loins? From *his* Loins, whom thou art about to kill?—The Blessing, thou knowest, is appropriated to Him. The grand Entail is settled upon Him—upon *Isaac* by Name—upon *Isaac alone*. If He perish, all is lost.—Canst thou, then, at one Blow, destroy the Life of thy Son; sacrifice all thy earthly Joys; and cut off the Hopes of the whole World?—Will none of these Considerations discourage, dissuade, deter thee?

Most triumphant Faith, indeed! Deservedly art thou styled, *The Father of the Faithful*. Thy Faith is stronger than all the Ties of Affection; stronger than all the Pleas of Nature; stronger than all the Terrors of Death—of a Death, in its Circumstances and in its Consequences, incomparably more dreadful than thy own.

Now must He travel, during three tedious, and, one would think, most melancholy Days. With his *Isaac* constantly before his Eyes; with the tragical Scene, continually presenting itself to his Apprehensions; and nothing to divert his Mind, from dwelling upon every afflictive Incident.—Thus must He travel, aged as He is, to a great Distance; in Suspence and Uncertainty all the while. Not knowing, where the fatal Business is to be transacted; whether in a private Spot, or on a public Stage. Only on one of the *Mountains which the LORD will tell Him of*.—There seems

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to be a Combination of all Things, in order to aggravate the Tryal; and urge Him to Disquietude, if not to Distraction.

On the third Day, Abraham lift up his Eyes, and saw the Place afar off. Doleful Sight! The Slaughter-House of his Son! Does not the Prospect alarm all his tender Passions? No; it only awakens his Circumspection. The Servants are commanded to advance no farther. Here they must take their Stand, and keep their Distance. Lest a well-meaning, but unseasonable Compassion, should prompt them to interpose.—He Himself, with the Fire and the Knife in his Hands; and his Son, with the Burden of Wood on his Shoulders, *went both of them together.*—Who does not pity the dear devoted Youth, toiling under that Load, which must soon reek with his Blood, and soon reduce him to Ashes?—Mean while the intended Victim, wondering to see all these Preparations made, and no proper Animal near, asks this pertinent Question; *My Father, behold the Fire and the Wood! But where is the Lamb for a Burnt-offering?* Nothing could be more tender and moving than this Speech; which discovered such a Knowledge of Religion, and such a Concern for its Duties. Will not this rouse the Father's Anguish, and shake his Determination? How can He be the Death of so much Innocence, and so much Piety?

Faith overcomes all Difficulties. Unmoved and inflexible, the Patriarch replies; *GOD will provide Himself a Lamb for a Burnt-offering, my Son* *. He

hides

* *Abraham* in this Answer, like many of the other Prophets in their Predictions, seems not to have *thoroughly understood* the Import of his own Words. What He Him-
self

hides the awful Tidings from the inquisitive Youth, lest they should be too heavy and afflictive for Him to bear. Of his own Firmness and Perseverance He was sufficiently assured. But who can tell, whether *Isaac's* Courage and Self-denial may be equal to such a Shock? Therefore He smothered the Brand in his own Breast; and forbears, as long as possible, to disclose the terrible Secret. *So they went both of them together.* The One, wondering at the Strangeness of the Affair, and “not knowing “that it is for his Life.” The Other, with a Fire pent up in his Bones; and fearing more to reveal, than to execute the Work.

And they came to the Place, which GOD had told him of. 'Tis a Mountain. Far from the Resort of Men: A doleful Solitude indeed! Gloomy Shades, and hoary Trees; ragged Rocks, and hideous Precipices; the Sound of headlong Cataracts, mingled with the Yell of ravenous Beasts; have made some Mountains extremely formidable. But all these Circumstances, wild and tremendous as they are, could never create a Terror, comparable to the Sadness and Horror of this single Thought: “Here my *Isaac* must bleed; on this Eminence He “breathes his last.”

I should

self meant, I apprehend, is represented in the following Paraphrase of his Speech. Yet GOD so over-ruled his Tongue, that it more fully expressed the divine Decree, than the parental Idea.

GOD will provide Himself a Lamb for a Burnt-offering, my Son. Thus the Words are placed in the Hebrew. *My Son* comes last, and closes the Reply. That the tender Accents may be left to vibrate on the Father's Ear, and the dear distressing Image continue playing before his Mind.—This, I think, is a Delicacy not to be overlooked, and increases the Pathos of the Narrative.

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I should not wonder to see the Patriarch overwhelmed with Consternation. His Thoughts lost in a Tumult of Fear, Trepidation, and Perplexity. So as not to know, either where to begin; or how to proceed; or what to do. But *Abraham* is all Composure. He dispatches the preparatory Business, without the least Hesitation, or the least Precipitancy. As calmly, as when, "rich in Cattle, "in Silver, and in Gold," He reared his Tent between *Bethel* and *Hai*.

Abraham builds an Altar there. An Altar, spacious, strong, and regular. Spacious, that it may receive, strong, that it may sustain, the Victim; and regular, that every Thing may be transacted with the utmost Decorum *. Nay; *He lays the Wood in Order.* Not huddles it together, with Haste and Confusion, into a rude Heap; but places each Piece in the properest Situation, to admit the Flames, and accelerate the Consumption of the Sacrifice.—How must this slow Process, and all these solemn Formalities, afford Leisure for Reflection to strike deep, and employ all her Stings!

Every Thing is now ready for the most astonishing and dreadful Act of Obedience, that Men or Angels ever beheld. And now *Abraham* discloses the startling Secret: "Didst thou enquire concerning the Lamb? Thou thyself, my dear Child, art "the Lamb provided for the Burnt-Offering.—Be "not amazed. Let not thy Heart fail.—The
"GOD,

* The Scriptures are generally concise in their Narratives. But the Relation of this Story is remarkably *circumstantial*. The more effectually to engage our Attention, and interest our Affections; as well as the more illustriously to display the numerous Difficulties, and the pressing Tryals, which the heroic Patriarch encountered—surmounted—triumphed over.

“GOD, who bestowed thee on my longing De-
 “fires, is pleased to require thee again at my Hand.
 “—The LORD gave, and the LORD taketh
 “away, let Us both adore the Name of the
 “LORD.—Let Us confide in his promised Good-
 “ness, and unanimously profess, *Though He slay me,*
 “*yet will I trust in Him.*”

It does not appear, that the amiable Youth re-
 sisted or gainsayed. He had Strength enough to op-
 pose, and Speed enough to escape *, the Attempts
 of an aged Father. Either or both of which, the
 Law of Self-preservation might seem to dictate,
 and the Light of Reason to justify. But *Isaac*
 knew, that his Father was a Prophet. In this pro-
 phetical Character, He sees and acknowledges the
 Warrant of Heaven. And since his CREA-
 TOR calls, He is content to go.—Excellent
Isaac! Who does not admire thy Courage? Who
 is not charmed with thy Resignation? And must
 We, in a few Minutes, must We see Thee a pale,
 a bloody, a breathless Corpse?

Methinks, I shudder as We draw near the dire-
 ful Catastrophe. The Father knows not how to
 relent, and the Son offers his † willing Throat to
 the Knife.—Nevertheless, that the Work of De-
 stiny may be sure, and no one Particular relating
 to a Sacrifice omitted, Abraham binds *Isaac his Son.*

I have

* According to *Josephus*, *Isaac was*, when He submit-
 ted Himself to the Slaughter, about twenty-five Years
 old. Others think, his Age was thirty-three; which
 makes Him more exactly resemble his suffering LORD.
 Then his Father must be above a hundred and thirty
 Years old. Either Account will justify *Aspasio's* Suppo-
 sition.

† His willing—*Isaac* *μετα αποδοχης; ηδως; ευκολο θυια.*
Clem. Rom. ad Corinth.

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I have known a stubborn Malefactor, quite unalarmed, when sentenced to the ignominious Tree; not at all impressed, with the most awful Representations of eternal Judgment; yet, when a Person came to measure him for his *Coffin*, the hardened Wretch was hard no longer. He started; turned pale; and trembled in every Joint.—Even such a Circumstance makes no Impression on *Abraham*; neither alters his Purpose, nor changes his Countenance. He measures his *Isaac*; measures those Limbs, which He had so frequently embraced, and so tenderly caressed; if not for the Coffin, yet for immediate Slaughter.

Having bound Him—surprising Resolution!—bound Him for the Sword and for the Flame, He lays Him upon the Altar on the Wood. There, now, lies *Isaac*; the dear, the dutiful, the religious *Isaac*! *Abraham's* Joy; *Sarah's* Delight; the Heir of the Promises! There He lies, all meek and resigned; expecting, every Moment, the Stroke of Death to fall.—O Parents! Parents! Do not your Bowels yearn? Is not Humanity itself distressed at the Scene?—Say, thou who art a Father, what thinkest Thou of *Abraham's* Obedience? Couldst Thou, to such a Son, have acted such a Part?

See! the Father, resolute to the very last, unsheaths the murdering Blade; makes bare the innocent Bosom; and marks the Place, where Life may find the speediest Exit. *His Heart is fixed!* He stretches forth his Hand; He lifts the sharpened Steel; and determined to finish at a Blow, is even now aiming—When—rejoice O ye Worshipers of a gracious GOD! Break forth into Singing, Ye that are in Pain for the tried Parent! The LORD Almighty

Almighty interposes, in this Article of extreme Need *. The ANGEL of the Covenant speaks from Heaven, and with-holds the Patriarch's Hand, in the very Act to strike. GOD, who only intended to manifest his Faith, and make it honourable, bids Him do no Harm to the Lqd. Yea; GOD applauds his Obedience; and substitutes another Sacrifice in Isaac's Stead; renews his Covenant with the Father, and not only reprieves the Life of the Son, but promises Him a numerous and illustrious Issue. Promises to make him the Progenitor of the MESSIAH, and thereby a Blessing to all the Nations of the Earth.

Tell me now, *Theron*, was there ever such an astonishing Effort of Obedience? Such a perfect Prodigy of Resignation? YET THIS HATH FAITH DONE †.—If you should ask, How was it possible for

* Upon this most seasonable Interposition, the inspired Historian makes a very judicious and edifying Remark. Which seems to be greatly obscured, if not entirely spoiled, by our Translation; *In the Mount of the LORD it shall be seen.* I must confess, I have always been puzzled to find, not only a pertinent Sense, but any Sense at all, in these Words. Whereas, the Original is as clear in its Signification, as it is apposite to the Purpose.—*בהר יחזה יראה* In the Mount the LORD will be seen; or, In the Mount the LORD will provide. q. d. "This memorable Event gave Rise to, at least is an eminent Exemplification of, that proverbial Expression, which is commonly used at this Day. In the Mount of Difficulty, or in the very Crisis of Need, when Matters seem to be irretrievable and desperate, then the LORD will appear as a present Help. Man's Extremity is GOD's Opportunity." See Gen. xxii. 14. † Heb. xi. 17. By Faith, Abraham, when He was tried, offered up Isaac.—The Faith, of which such glorious Things

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for *Abraham* to perform all this, in the Manner described? The Answer is obvious. Because *Abraham* BELIEVED; or in other Words, was fully persuaded, that the Arm of the LORD, which had raised this Son from the *barren* Womb, was able to raise Him again even from dissected Limbs or from *smoking* * Ashes.—The same GOD, who required this Sacrifice, had expressly declared, *In Isaac shall thy Seed be called*. Therefore the Patriarch assured Himself, that the Promise would, in a Way known to infinite Wisdom, be most punctually accomplished.

Hence Things are spoken, to which such admirable Atchievements are ascribed, throughout this whole Chapter, was a Faith “in the Seed of the Woman,” the promised MESSIAH.—Or, could it be demonstrated (which, from Verse 26 alone, I will venture to pronounce impossible) that in all these heroic Instances of Obedience, there was no believing Regard to CHRIST; no Apprehension of his unspeakable Love; no Application of his transcendent Merits; our Argument would not lose its Force, but strike with redoubled Energy. For, if a Belief in very inferior Manifestations of the divine Goodness, Faithfulness, and Power, wrought so efficaciously on those antient Worthies; how much more victoriously must the same Principle act, under far brighter Displays of all the supreme Perfections, in the Person of JESUS CHRIST!—I would only add, that so long as this Chapter remains in the Bible, it will furnish an unanswerable Confutation of those Objections, which suppose the Doctrine of Faith to have an unkindly Influence on religious or virtuous Practice. Against all such Cavils, it will stand fast for evermore as the Moon, and as the faithful Witness in Heaven.

* He seems to have expected not only the certain, but the immediate Restoration of his slain Son. That he should be revived on the very Spot; before He left the Place; so as to accompany his Return. For, he says to his Servants, not I, but We will go, and worship, and return. *נשובה* Ver. 5.

Hence he made no Dispute, and felt no Reluctance. His Faith disregarded all the Contrariety of Appearances; banished every uneasy Apprehension; and neither Fear, nor Sorrow, had place in his Breast. Confident of GOD's Ability, and making no Doubt of his Fidelity, He *readily and cheerfully* * obeyed. You

* This Account, is so *very extraordinary*, that I shall not be surpris'd, if the Reader finds some Difficulty in giving his Assent to it. Especially, as He may have accustomed Himself to form very different Conceptions of this remarkable Affair; and may possibly be confirm'd in a different Train of Ideas, by seeing a Representation of the Story in a celebrated *Print*. Where the Father appears, clasping his Son in a tender Embrace; bedewing him with his Tears; and suffering as much through Grief, as the devoted Youth is going to suffer by the Knife.—But the *Artist*, I apprehend, had not so attentively examined the Circumstances of the sacred Narrative, nor so carefully compared them with other Passages of Scripture, as a judicious and worthy *Friend* of mine. From whom I learnt to consider this wonderful Transaction in the above-represented View. And I must confess, the more I revolve it in my Mind, the more I am convinced of its Propriety and Truth. That all was transacted, not with great Reluctance and extreme Anguish; but, as *Chrysostom* very strongly speaks, *μετὰ εὐθυμίας ζήσης καὶ ἐπιταχύνουσιν ὁδοῦ*, with *Alacrity and Zeal, with intense Desire and complacential Delight*.

I flatter myself, the Reader will be of the same Opinion, if he pleases to consult the Tenth Chapter of *Leviticus*. Where *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the Sons of *Aaron*, are devoured by Fire from before the LORD. Yet *Aaron* is not allowed to mourn, even at such a terrible and afflictive Visitation. And when, through the Frailty of human Nature, He could not wholly refrain, He durst not presume to eat of the Sin-offering. *Such Things*, says He, *have befallen me, if I had eaten of the Sin-offering, should it have been accepted in the Sight of the LORD?*—

Let me add, that we find not the least Indication of such

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Cor. ix. 7.

You admire, and very justly, this heroic Act of Obedience.—A Son, for whom He waited so long—received in so extraordinary a Manner—upon whom his Heart was set—in whom all his Expectations centered—who alone could convey to all Nations the promised Blessing—to offer *this* Son as a Sacrifice, and that by his *own* Hand—never was such an Instance of Obedience performed, attempted, or heard of.—Yet We shall both do well to remember, that *Abraham* was not justified by this, but by the infinitely more noble Obedience of JESUS CHRIST. His Faith, receiving this, relying on this, rejoicing in this, disposed and enabled Him for such wonderful Self-denial, Fortitude, and Duty.

If all this, which would otherwise have been utterly impracticable, was wrought by Faith; You need not suspect, of *Weakness* and *Insufficiency*, so approved a Principle. Far, far from enervating, it will invigorate every good Disposition; and instead of damping, will give Life to every religious Duty.—Cherish Faith, and You will of course cultivate Obedience. Water this Root, and the Branches of universal Godliness will assuredly partake the beneficial Effects; will spread their Honours, and bring forth their Fruits.—Through the *Power* of Faith, the Saints have wrought Righteousness, in all its magnanimous and exemplary Acts.—The

VOL. III.

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Doctrine

agonizing Sorrow, nor indeed of any Sorrow at all, in the History as related by *Moses*. Neither could *Abraham* have been a proper Type of the eternal FATHER, making his only begotten SON a Sacrifice for Sin, if He had not willingly offered up *Isaac*. Indeed to offer willingly, seems to have been absolutely necessary, in every acceptable Oblation, and every religious Service. See Cor. ix. 7. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

Doctrine of Faith is called by St. Paul, *A Doctrine according to Godliness* *; exquisitely contrived to answer all the Ends, and secure every Interest of real Piety.—The *Grace* of Faith St. *Jude* styles, *Our most holy Faith* †; intimating, that it is not only productive of Holiness, but that the most *refined* and *exalted* Holiness arises from this Stock; is produced by believing in JESUS.

Let Us then be diligent to exercise, and careful to increase, Faith in JESUS CHRIST. Let Us maintain the same zealous Solitude for this leading capital Grace, as the renowned *Epaminondas* expressed for his Shield. When that gallant General was, in an Engagement with the Enemy, struck to the Ground; his Soldiers carried him off, breathless and fainting to his Tent. The Moment he opened his Eyes, and recovered the Use of Speech, he asked—not whether his Wound was Mortal? not whether his Troops were routed?—But whether his *Shield* was safe?—May We be enabled, my dear Friend, to keep our Shield safe! May We be *strong*, be *steady*, be *lively* in Faith! Then, I doubt not, We shall give Glory to GOD; receive Comfort to Ourselves; and abound in the Works of the LORD.

The Apostle prays, in behalf of his *Ephesian* Converts, that they may every One enjoy the Privileges of Grace, and each experience the Efficacy of Faith. Or, to use his own animated Words, That they may know, what is the *Hope* of their Calling in CHRIST JESUS; and what is the exceeding Greatness of his Power, to themward who believe. Than which Prayer, nothing can close either this or the preceding Letter, with more Propriety, or

* 1 Tim. vi. 3. † Jude 20. ‡ Eph. i. 18.

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with greater Dignity. As nothing can more fully express the Sentiments, the Wishes, the very Soul of

Your most affectionate

ASPASIO.

P.S. I said, "The infinitely more noble Obedience
" of *JESUS CHRIST*."—For, to this
Obedience I would have our Thoughts con-
tinually directed. This surpasses the Ser-
vices both of Angels and Men, in all their
various and wonderful Orders. 'Tis true,
compared with our Duties, *Abraham's* Obe-
dience is like *Saul's* Stature; *who, from his*
Shoulders and upward, was higher than any of
the People. But when the Righteousness of
CHRIST comes into View, it is somewhat
like that magnificent Personage, described
by *St. John*, in the tenth of the *Revelation* *.
—Should such a sublime and majestic Being,
appear amidst an Assembly, of the most re-
nowned Monarchs in the World; how would
their Splendour be eclipsed, and all their
Grandeur dwindle into Meanness! Before
such an illustrious Potentate of Heaven, who
would take Notice of *Cæsar*, or bestow a
Look upon *Alexander*? So, the Righteousness
of *CHRIST*, being the Righteousness of
HIM, who lay in the Bosom of the FA-
THER from Eternity; the Righteousness
of HIM, who now sits on the right Hand of
the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens;

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this

* If the Reader pleases, He may see this beautiful and
grand Piece of Imagery illustrated, in *Hervey's Medita-*
tions, Vol. II. p. 21. Edit. 14.

this Righteousness being, in itself most consummately perfect, and unspeakably ennobled by the Dignity of the Performer; all other Kinds, Degrees, or Forms of Righteousness, shrink, before it, into the Littleness of Pygmies, of Worms, of Mites. Could they speak, the Language of each would be; "Look not upon me, for I am dim, yea, I am black. But look upon your LORD, for HIS Works are marvelous, and HE is glorious in his Holiness."



L E T T E R XII.

ASPASIO to THERON.

IT is very probable, while I am reading yours, You are perusing mine. But how unlike is my Friend to the Representation he receives! How unlike the satisfied, unsuspecting, chearful *Abraham*! Why this *dejected* Air in your Temper? Why these *pensive* Strokes in your Letter*?—Let me anticipate your Reply, and make Answer to myself.—This Gloom, I trust, is a Sign of approaching Day. Just before the Morning Dawn, the nocturnal Darkness is blackest. And just before the Appearance

* *Theron's* Letter is suppressed; because, a great Part of it, or what is much to the same Purpose, will occur in the following Dialogues. Where He opens his Conscience, and discloses his Scruples, Fears, and Distresses.

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pearance of the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, the alarmed Sinner's Distress is frequently the deepest. I promise myself, the Hour is at Hand, which will *put off your Sackcloth, and gird You with Gladness.*

Another favourable Prefage is, That You take the direct and certain Way, to obtain substantial Comfort. The Righteousness of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, after which You inquire, about which You are solicitous, is a never-failing Source of Consolation. Because it acquits from all Sin; secures from all Condemnation; and renders the Believer unblameable and unreprouable in the Sight of GOD. Therefore, says the HOLY GHOST, *His Name is as Ointment poured forth**: even that divinely precious Name—by which He has been celebrated in the preceding Epistles; by which he is distinguished in the Scriptures of Truth; by which, I hope, He will be more and more revealed in my *Theron's* Mind—THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. The Discovery of Him under this most amiable and glorious Capacity, will indeed be like breaking open a Vial of the richest Unguents. Which not only fill the Room, and regale the Sense, with their delightful Fragrance; but refresh the Spirits, and *rejoice the very Heart.*—Might my Writing, or my Discourse, be as the *Alabaster-box* to contain, to convey, and present these reviving Odours; how highly should I think myself honoured, and how signally my Endeavours blessed!

You ask, “How this Righteousness of the Divine *REDEEMER* becomes ours?”—It is a Question,

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* Cant. i. 3.

tion, which I receive with the utmost Pleasure; and, with equal Pleasure, shall attempt an Answer. Or rather, as the SPIRIT of our GOD prompted the first, may the same unerring GUIDE suggest the last!—This He has abundantly done by his Prophets and Apostles. So that I need only have recourse to their Writings, and collect some of the Hints, which lie treasured up in those Store-houses of Wisdom.

There We are often told of Union with *CHRIST*. Believers are said to be *in CHRIST**, and to be *one with CHRIST*†.—What is still higher, and implies a greater Degree of Nearness, They are *Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones*‡.—And, which denotes the most intimate Connection imaginable, *They that are joined to the LORD JESUS, are one Spirit* || with Him!—As these Expressions appear dark, and their Sense lies deep, it has pleased our all-condescending INSTRUCTOR to illustrate them, by a Variety of significant Types, and lively Similitudes. This Remark very opportunely reminds me of an Engagement, which, some Time ago, I undertook to execute, but have hitherto omitted—To make it evident, that the blessed Doctrine, for which We have been pleading, is deducible from several Scripture Images §. A short Discant upon some of the principal, will, I hope, at once discharge my former Obligation, and satisfy your present Inquiry.

This was shadowed forth by the costly, odoriferous, flowing Unguent, poured upon *Aaron's Head*

* Col. i. 2.

† Heb. ii. 11.

‡ Eph. v. 30

|| 1 Cor. vi. 17.

§ See Vol. II. p. 353.

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which ran down upon his Beard, and descended to the Skirts * of his Clothing. So the Merits of our great HIGH-PRIEST are derived down to all the Faithful; even those of the meanest Station in Life, and the lowest Attainments in Religion.

Was it not typified by that instructive Vision, which the Prophet Zechariah saw? *I have looked, and behold! A Candlestick all of Gold, with a Bowl upon the Top of it, and his seven Lamps thereon, and seven Pipes to the seven Lamps, which were upon the Top thereof: And two Olive-trees by it, one upon the right Side of the Bowl, and the other upon the left Side thereof; which, through two golden Pipes, empty the golden Oil out of themselves †.* The Bowl and the Lamps were a proper Emblem of Believers: who are, by Nature, dry Vessels, and destitute of all Good; yet should shine as Lights, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation.—The *Olive-trees*, arrayed in Verdure, and abounding with Sap; always emptying themselves, yet ever full; are a very just Representation of *CHRIST*, of his unchangeable Love, and his inexhaustible Grace.—The *golden Pipes*, through which the Olive-branches transmit their Oil, seem to be figurative of Faith, in its

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various

* Psal. cxxxiii. 2. What We render *Skirts*, is, in the Original, not כנף, but פִּי מְדוּתָיו, *The Mouth*, or, as the Word is translated (*Job xxx. 18.*) *The Collar* of his Garments. It is hardly supposable, that the consecrating Oil flowed down to the very Bottom of the sacerdotal Vestments. But We may easily imagine it reaching the upper Hem, or the Opening round the Neck; what the *Greeks* call περιπραχθαιον—This Sense will sufficiently preserve the Gradation; The *Head*; the *Beard*; the *Clothes*. Which seem to denote *CHRIST*, his more advanced Saints, and Believers of a lower Class.

† Zech. iv. 2, 3, 12.

various and repeated Actings. By these Channels of Conveyance, the unspeakable Benefits of a REDEEMER are communicated to our Souls, and replenish those empty Basons.

Another Type the Apostle mentions. *The first Adam*, He says, *was a Figure of Him that was to come* *. So eminent a Figure, and corresponding in so many Instances, that He styles our *LORD JESUS the last Adam* †. And why? Because, like the first, He was a *Covenant-head* to his People, and transacted in their Stead. Were we made Sinners in *Adam*? We are made righteous in *CHRIST*. Is *Adam's* Sin imputed to all his natural Offspring? So is *CHRIST's* Righteousness to all his spiritual Seed.—The Consequences of both, render the Doctrine more intelligible, and the Truth more undeniable. All Men are *judged, condemned, dead* ‡; doomed inevitably to the Death of the Body, and justly liable to the Death of the Soul, on the Score of *Adam's* Transgression. All Believers are *acquitted, justified, saved* ||; saved from the first Death, and made Heirs of the Resurrection; saved from the second Death, and intitled to Life eternal; by virtue of *CHRIST's* Obedience.

This Union with *CHRIST*, was not only prefigured by Types, but displayed by a Variety of Similitudes, taken from the most familiar Occurrences of Life. By which it appears to be our Divine MASTER's Will, that We should live under the *habitual Belief* of this momentous Truth, and in the *constant Enjoyment* of this distinguished Privilege.—You cannot visit a Friend, or view your

Children;

* Rom. v. 14.
25, 16.

† 1 Cor. xv. 45.

|| Rom. v. 19, 21.

‡ Rom. v.

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Children; You cannot enter your Garden, discourse with your Spouse, or contemplate your own Body, without a Representation and a Remembrancer of this precious Blessing.

CHRIST says to his Disciples, *Henceforth I call You not Servants but Friends* *. Friends are a second Self †. *St. Paul*, speaking of *Onesimus*, uses this remarkable Phrase, *Receive Him, as Myself*; and, which is still more emphatical, *Receive Him, that is mine own Bowels* ‡. Is not *CHRIST*'s Friendship of the most tender and exalted Kind? Is it not equal, is it not superior, infinitely superior to that of *Paul* for *Onesimus*, or that of *Jonathan* for *David*?—*Jonathan* loved *David* as his own Soul. But *CHRIST* loved Sinners with a Love stronger than Death. They were dearer to Him than his own inestimable Life.—*Jonathan* exposed himself to imminent Danger, in vindicating *David*'s Conduct. *JESUS* surrendered himself to certain Death, in making Reconciliation for our Offences.—*Jonathan* interceded once and again with his Father in *David*'s Behalf. *CHRIST* ever liveth, to plead his Blood, and make Intercession for Transgressors.—*Jonathan* stripped Himself of the Robe that was upon Him, and gave it to *David*, and his Garment, even to his Sword, and his Bow, and his Girdle ||. Our REDEEMER, without stripping Himself, has clothed Us (such is the Prerogative of a Divine Person!) with the Robe of his Righteousness, and with the Garment of his Salvation. He has consigned over to Us all the Merit of his holy Life and propitiatory Death.

CHRIST

* John xv. 15.

† *Horace* calls his Friend *Virgil*, *Animæ Dimidium meæ*.

‡ *Philem.* 12, 17.

|| 1 Sam. xviii. 4.

CHRIST stands related to his People, not as a Friend only, but as a *Parent*. He is called by a Prophet, *THE EVERLASTING FATHER* *; and we are said, by an Apostle, to be *his Children* †. —Children look upon themselves, as interested in the Wealth of their Parents. They expect, and not without reasonable Ground, to reap Benefit from it, while the Parents live; and to become Possessors of it, when they die. Accordingly the Father says in the Gospel; *Son, all that I have is thine* ‡ —Since the high and holy *IMMANUEL* vouchsafes to be our *FATHER*, can we suppose Him less generous than an earthly Parent? Or can We imagine that *his Children* shall have less to hope, than the Heirs of an earthly Progenitor? May We not, ought We not to regard all his communicable Goods, all the Benefits resulting from his meritorious Sufferings and perfect Obedience, as our Portion? —Especially, since He is the *Testator* || also; has bequeathed them to Us by Will; and, having submitted to Death, they become legally ours.

I am the VINE, says our *LORD*, *Ye are the Branches* §. They who believe, are ingrafted into *CHRIST*. —Take notice of a Cyon. What are the Consequences of its *Ingrafture*? It is embodied with the Substance of the Tree, and partakes of its Fatness. The Sap, imbibed by the Root, circulates into it; gives it vegetable Life; fills it with Buds, decks it with Blossoms, and loads it with Fruit. —If then we are one with *CHRIST*, as much as the Branch is one with the Stock, it should seem probable, even upon the Principles of common Experience, that his *Wisdom* is ours, to en-

lighten

* Isai. vi. 9.
|| Heb. ix. 17.

† Heb. ii 13,
§ John xv. 5.

‡ Luke xv. 31.

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lighten Us; his *Righteousness* is ours, to justify Us; his *Spirit* is ours, to sanctify Us; his *Redemption* is ours, to make Us completely and eternally happy.

—What seems probable from the Nature of Things, is rendered certain by the Word of Revelation. For thus saith our unerring Teacher; *Of Him are Ye in CHRIST JESUS; Who of GOD is made unto Us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. In CHRIST JESUS;* here the Union is expressed. Then follows, and from thence flows, a *Communion* with Him in all his mediatorial Blessings.

CHRIST is united to his People by a Tie, closer and dearer than the parental. They are not only his Children, but his *Spouse*. He is often called their Bridegroom, and is not ashamed to avow the tender Engagement; *I will betroth Thee to Me for ever. Yea, I will betroth Thee unto me in Righteousness, and in Judgment, and in Loving-kindness, and in Mercies. I will even betroth Thee unto Me in Faithfulness* *. The condescending *GOD* multiplies, diversifies, accumulates his Words. And this, with admirable Propriety, as well as surpassing Goodness. The Honour is so *high*, and the Favour so *great*, We should hardly know how to believe it, and hardly venture to apply it. Lest therefore by a single Expression, it should not be sufficiently established, it stands ratified by repeated Asseverations, and with all the Energy of Language. So that, be the Grace ever so astonishing, We are assured, the Fact is equally certain; He that is our *MAKER*, is also our *HUSBAND* †.

Let

* Hof. ii. 19, 20.

† Isai. liv. 5. *Thy MAKER is thy Husband; the LORD of Hosts is his Name; thy REDEEMER, the Holy One of Israel; the GOD of the whole Earth shall He*

Let Us consider what follows, upon such an Union. We may take for an Example, the Case of

Boaz

He be called. Wonderfully emphatical, and unspeakably precious Words!—*Thy MAKER is thy Husband.* Left any, amazed at this Condescension and Grace, should stagger through Unbelief, and attempt to qualify the Expression; lest a Suspicion should arise, that the Expression, thus connected, can never mean the self-existent, the eternal, infinite GOD; the Prophet explains Himself, *The LORD of Hosts is his Name.* He is no inferior or subordinate Person. He is none other than the supreme omnipotent JEHOVAH; who does according to his Will, among the Armies of the Sky, and the Reptiles of the Ground.—As this is a Doctrine of the last Importance, the sacred Writer pours greater Light upon it, and ascertains it with greater Precision. *The Holy One of Israel* is his Name; possessed of all Holiness, Perfection, and Glory; whom the Church in all Ages and Places, acknowledge as the one adorable Object of their Worship, their Hope, their Faith.—To establish, beyond all Contradiction, this most joyous and ravishing Truth, it is farther declared; *The GOD, not of Israel only, but of the whole Earth,* and of all the Nations, *shall He be called.* Yes; HE, who is the Husband of his People, and loves them with the Complacency of a Bridegroom; HE now is, and sooner or later shall be recognized, as the sole Proprietor of the Universe. As the Creator, Governor, and GOD, of all Men, Creatures, and Things.

Let the Reader, at his Leisure, compare the foregoing Text with those Passages in the New Testament, which represent *CHRIST*, as the Bridegroom and Husband of his Church. The Comparison will yield a most delightful and incontestable Proof, that our SAVIOUR is the *LORD of Hosts, the Holy One of Israel, the GOD of the whole Earth.* A Truth, which should never depart from our Minds; which should be interwoven with all our Meditations on *CHRIST*. Since it gives much the same Addition of Beauty, Dignity, and Glory, to the Privileges of the Gospel and the whole Plan of Redemption; which the Light of the Sun gives to the Flowers of the Garden, the Prospects of the Field, and the whole Face of Nature. See *John iii. 29. Rev. xxi. 9. 2 Cor. xi. 2.*

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Boaz and Ruth. Soon as their Nuptials were solemnized, she that was poor, became rich: from a Gleaner in the Field, she commenced *Mistress* of the Harvest: and, from abiding by the Maidens, had a Seat at the Master's Table.—If we are united to *CHRIST* by a Marriage Contract, the same Effects take place. We that were poor, are rich in Him. We, who had Nothing, possess all Things in *CHRIST*. We that dwell in Dust, are made to sit together with our exalted HUSBAND in heavenly Places*.

If you choose some modern Exemplification, what can be more pertinent, than the remarkable Instance of your Neighbour *Arietta*? She was lately left a Widow, by the dissolute and extravagant *Bellarion*. Her Circumstances miserably embarrassed, and the Estate deeply mortgaged. Her Friends looked shy, and her Creditors became clamorous. Scarce a Day passed, but it made some new Discovery of Debts contracted by the Deceased. So that the Affairs of the Survivor appeared with a more melancholy Aspect, and in a less retrievable Condition. But, having won, first the Compassion, then the Affection, of the wealthy and illustrious *Philander*; how happily is the Face of Things altered! All her Debts devolve upon Him, and all his *Dignity* is derived to Her†. He stands responsible, for whatever

* Eph. ii. 6.

† *Ubi Tu Caius, ibi Ego Caia* was the Roman Maxim. Agreeably to this Rule, which has obtained among all civilized Nations, the Scripture calls the Church by the Name of her Husband; and the divine Husband by the Name of the Church. To denote that interchangeable Relation, and Communion of Interests, which result from such a conjugal State. Compare *Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.* with *Isai. xlix. 3.* and *Jer. xxxiii. 15, 16.*

ever She *owes*; and She is a Sharer, in whatever He *possesses*. Though ruined by her late Husband, She is more than restored by her present; has Reason to rejoice in his Affluence, and to glory in his Honours.—Have not We also Reason to rejoice in our heavenly BRIDEGROOM? Since a far more glorious Exchange subsists between Him and his mystical Spouse. He has bore the *Curse*, that We may inherit the *Blessing*. *Sin* was charged on Him, that *Righteousness* might be imputed to Us. In a Word, He has sustained our deplorable Miseries, that He might impart to Us his unsearchable Treasures.—Does the Law demand *perfect* Purity of Nature, and *perfect* Obedience of Life? It must go to Him for Satisfaction. Do We want Grace, and Glory, and every good Thing? We may look to Him for a Supply. To HIM, *Theron*, in whom it has pleased the FATHER, that all Fulness should dwell*.

If any Thing can express an Union, more intimate and inseparable than the conjugal, it is that of the Members with the *Head*. This Image is used by the HOLY GHOST, to shadow forth the Connection between *CHRIST* and the Faithful. He is the *Head over all Things*, with respect to Rule and Supremacy; but a Head of Life, and Influence, with respect to the Church†.—The Head and the Members constitute one natural Body; *CHRIST* and his Church compose one mystical Body. What Kindness is done, what Injury is offered to the Members, the Head regards them as done to itself. Accordingly *CHRIST* says to the outrageous *Saul*, who made Havock of the Church; *Saul, Saul, why persecutest Thou ME†?* He declares concerning

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* Col. i. 19. † Eph. i. 22. † Acts ix. 4.

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* Matt.

those indigent *Christians* to whose Necessities We administer Relief; *Inasmuch as Ye have done it unto them, Ye have done it unto ME* *.—The Animal Spirits formed in the Head, are formed for the Benefit of the whole Body, and designed for the Use of all the Members. So the Righteousness wrought by *JESUS CHRIST*, is wrought out for his whole mystical Body, and intended for the Advantage of all his People; to be the constituent Cause of their Justification, and the meritorious Cause of their Salvation.

Being then so nearly related, so closely united to the blessed *JESUS*, it is no wonder, that Believers are now loved with the same fatherly Love, and will hereafter be Partakers of the same heavenly Glory †.—What might we not expect from the ever faithful REDEEMER, if He vouchsafed to acknowledge but *one* of these endearing Names? Since He has engaged Himself to Us by *all* the Ties of Affinity and Affection; may we not promise Ourselves, and with the Assurance of Hope, every good Thing; *Even all the Fulness of GOD* ‡ our Saviour?—Does not each of these tender Relations, subsisting between *CHRIST* and his Saints, imply an intire Property in one another, and a mutual Participation of all that belongs to either? If this is included in each separately, how much more in all conjointly? *My Beloved is mine, and I am his*. I dare not say, this is the Posy of the mystical Ring. Lest the Thought should appear quaint, and below the Dignity of the Subject. But this expresses the Effect, the undoubted Effect of so enriching, so ennobling, so divine an Union.

How

* Matt. xxv. 40. † John xvii. 22, 23. ‡ Eph. iii. 19.

How pleasing, yet how amazing the Thought! Shall We, who say to Corruption, *Thou art my Father*; and to the Worm, *Thou art my Mother and my Sister* *: shall *We* be permitted to say, concerning the HEAD of all Principality and Power, *We are Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones* †? —What a Mercy might We esteem it, not to be confounded before a MAJESTY so sublime and magnificent! What a Favour to obtain the least propitious Regard from the KING immortal and invisible! What an Honour, to be admitted into his Family, and numbered among the Meanest of his Servants! —But to be his *adopted* Children; to be his *espoused* Bride; to be the Members of his sacred Body—To have HIM for our everlasting *Father*, HIM for the *Bridegroom* of our Souls, HIM for our heavenly *Head*; who is the MAKER of all Worlds, and the SOVEREIGN of all Creatures! What Words can duly celebrate, what Heart can sufficiently admire, the Condescension and the Love of our adorable JESUS? Or who can justly question the Fruits of such a Fellowship, and the Consequences of such an Union? Question them! No, the Fruits are infallibly sure, as the Privilege is inexpressibly great.

Let me once again introduce Dr. *Lightfoot*, as a great and venerable Witness of both these Truths. “*Laban* speak high, when He said; *These Children are mine, and all these Things thou seest are mine.*” “But how high and glorious is that, which may be said of a justified Person! All thou hearest of “*CHRIST* is thine; his Life is thine, his Death “is thine, his Obedience, Merit, Spirit, all thine*.”

—To

* Job xvii. 14.

† Eph. v. 30.

‡ See Dr. LIGHTFOOT's *Works*, Vol. II. p. 1077.

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—To this let me join another Witness, whose Testimony, though more plain, is no less weighty. “Faith, says *Luther*, must be purely taught: namely, that Thou art so entirely and nearly joined to *CHRIST*, that He and Thou are made as it were one Person: so that thou mayest boldly say, “I am now one with *CHRIST*; that is to say, “*CHRIST*’s Righteousness, Victory, and Life are mine. And again, *CHRIST* may say, I am that Sinner, that is, his Sins and his Death are mine, because He is united and joined unto Me and I unto Him*.”—Rich and important Words! Than which nothing can give Us a juster or fuller Explanation of the Apostle’s Assertion, *We are Partakers of CHRIST* †.

When some foreign Ladies, of the first Quality, paid a Visit to *Leonidas*’s Queen; the Talk turned upon their rich Clothes, their costly Jewels, and splendid Equipage. After they had severally displayed their own Grandeur, they inquired after her Majesty’s Finery. What *She* had to distinguish Her from the Vulgar?—She replied, *My illustrious Husband* ‡.—What else? *My illustrious Husband*.—And as often as They repeated the same Question, She returned the same Answer.—Could this Queen speak of her royal Consort, in such admiring, rejoicing, self-gratulating Terms? And shall not vile Sinners look upon their REDEEMER—that most majestic, yet all-condescending Bride-
VOL. III. S groom;

* LUTHER upon *Galat.*

† Heb. iii. 14.

‡ The amiable and heroic *Panthea* expresses Herself in much the same Manner, concerning her gallant Husband *Abradates*; *Σὺ γὰρ εἶμις μελὶς καὶ κόσμος ἐστίν.* XENOPH. *Cyropæd.* Lib. VI.

groom; who is full of Grace and Truth, full of Merit and Righteousness—shall not they *much more* look upon HIM, as their Honour and their Joy; the Object of their Dependence, and the Cause of their Boasting?

You once mentioned *Self-importance*. I hope, We have now renounced that specious Absurdity. Have abjured that Idol of Jealousy. It is as much a Delusion, as it is a Provocation. Nothing can give Us any Importance, but the Work and Worthiness of *CHRIST*.—Without these, We are despicable and abominable. Our Performances are Vanity; our Persons are Pollution; and both deserve to be treated, like that infamous King of *Israel*, to whom the Prophet *Elisha* declared; *As the LORD GOD of Hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the Presence of Jehoshaphat King of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee**.—But the Work and Worthiness of *CHRIST*, give Us Acceptance with *GOD*, and Dignity before his Angels. These will afford Us Consolation on Earth, and procure for Us Estimation in Heaven. Through these, We may lift up our Heads with Courage, at the Judgment-Seat; and may make our Appearance with Honour, amidst the Inhabitants of Glory.—Let Us then exult, let Us triumph, in our heavenly Bridegroom. *Forsaking all other Causes of Confidence, let Us keep our Hearts, our Affections, our Thoughts, only to HIM.*

I should find it difficult, to refrain from the farther Prosecution of so engaging a Topic, did I not purpose to wait upon my *Theron* very speedily. Then
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* 2 Kings iii. 14.

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I shall have an Opportunity of pouring into his Bosom all the Fulness of my Heart, with regard to this delightful Subject.—In the mean time, let me exhort my dear Friend, to be of good Comfort. *Heaviness may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning* *. This Sorrow of which you complain, may be the Fore-runner of spiritual and eternal Consolation.

While I am writing, there appears full in my View, one of the finest *Rainbows*, I ever beheld. *It compasseth the Heaven with a glorious Circle*; so glorious, that it is no Disparagement of the Almighty CREATOR, to say, *the Hands of the MOST HIGH have bended it* †—On what Foundation, would I ask, is that stately and beautiful Arch raised? From what Source, do all its radiant and lovely Colours spring? It is raised on a *gloomy Assemblage of Vapours*; and all its rich Tinctures spring from a *louring Cloud*.—Thus does the blessed GOD, on a Conviction of Guilt and a Sense of Ruin, spread Faith, imprint Holiness, and diffuse Gladness. May all these, ere long, arise in my Theron's Breast! And each be—*bright*, as that resplendent Bow—*lasting*, as the Sun that creates it!

Yes; it is the ardent Wish of my Soul, and shall be my frequent Prayer to GOD, *That both our Hearts may be comforted, being knit together in Love, unto all Riches of the full Assurance of Understanding* ‡, in this great Mystery of Godliness.—What Vigour of Expression, what Exuberance of Ideas, and, above all, what distinguished Privileges are Here!—*Assurance—Full Assurance—Riches*

S 2

of

* Psal. xxx. 5. † Eccclus. xliii. 12. ‡ Col. ii. 2.

of the full Assurance—*All* Riches of the full Assurance of Understanding—in reference to our Union with *CHRIST*, and its unutterably precious Effects!—Can the Orator express more? Can the Sinner desire more? Can the Saint, I had almost said, can the Archangel enjoy more?—May this be the Portion of my dear *Theron*, and of

His ever faithful

ASPASIO.



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DIALOGUE XV.

A SPASIO had taken Leave of his Friend *Camillus*, and was come to revisit *Theron*. Whose Thoughts seemed to be in a State of much Fluctuation, and no small Anxiety. Hoping, that some proper Conversation on the *Grace* and *Privileges* of the Gospel, might compose and comfort his Mind. Might, while his Heart was softened by humbling Convictions, fix the Stamp of genuine Christianity; and deliver his whole Soul into the Mould* of evangelical Religion.

*When Sorrow wounds the Breast, as Ploughs the Glebe,
And Hearts obdurate feel her soft'ning Show'r,
Her Seed celestial then glad Wisdom sows:
Her golden Harvests triumph in the Soil †.*

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* *Deliver into the Mould*—This is the literal Translation, and exact Sense of St. Paul's Phrase; *Εἰς οὐρανὴν κατασκευάζετε τὸν νοῦν ὑμῶν*. Rom. vi. 17.—Which, as it contains a beautiful Allusion, conveys also a very instructive Admonition. Intimating, that our Minds, all pliant and ductile, should be conformed to the Precepts of the Gospel, as liquid Metals take the Figure of some elegant Mould, into which they are cast.

† Night-Thoughts.

278 DIALOGUE XV.

He arrived pretty late in the Evening: and, being somewhat weary with the Journey, soon withdrew to his Repose.—The next Morning, as *Theron* walked abroad, to taste the cool Delights of the Dawn; He was agreeably surpris'd, by meeting *Aspasio*.

Ther. So soon awake, my worthy Friend! And after so much Fatigue on the preceding Day!—I had not the least Expectation of your Company, till Breakfast. Then indeed I promised myself a double Regale—The Refreshments exhibited on the Table; and those *wholesome Words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST* *, which, more precious than Manna, drop—

Asp. How, *Theron*!—Have you also learnt those soothing Arts, which polish the Speech, to deprave our Sentiments? Could I have suspected the enchanting Wiles of *Flattery*, from my sincere, my tried, my bosom Friend?

Ther. Your Friend is still sincere, and his Words are very remote from Flattery.—How welcome to the wind-bound *Mariner*, weary with Expectation, and sick with Disappointments, is the Visit of a propitious Gale! How welcome to the *Fields*, parched with Drought, and gasping for Moisture, are copious Showers of Rain! How acceptable to the *Israelites*, traveling through the inhospitable Desert, and pining for want of the Fruits of the Earth, was the miraculous Supply of heavenly Bread!—Yet, neither propitious Gales to the wind-bound *Mariner*, nor copious Showers to the thirsty Soil, nor heavenly Bread to the famished *Israelites*, could be more welcome to each respectively, or to all

all jointly, than your late Conversation, and later Correspondence, to my anxious Soul.

Asp. Why, I thought, you looked upon my Notions as chimerical ! Is *Theron* also become credulous ? Like one of Us weak-headed Believers ?—Has *He* quitted the Strong-holds of Reason ? Is *He* vanquished by the Sling-stone of Faith ? Or can *He* submit to this strange Method of Salvation, by embracing the Righteousness, and relying on the Obedience of Another ?

Ther. I find, my Reason was a feeble Guide ; or I myself not faithful to its genuine Dictates. I was blinded with Prejudice. I was intoxicated with Pride. A vain Conceit of my moral Powers, betrayed me, as I fear it has betrayed many, into a Contempt of the evangelical Righteousness.—I held, what I thought an Honour to human Nature. I now retract my Opinion. I now perceive, that as my *natural Light* could not discover the Way, neither can my *personal Obedience* put me in Possession, of Life and Salvation. No more Banter, *Aspasio* :—Have done :—I am serious, and very much in earnest. So much in earnest, that if all my Acquaintance of the *Pharisaical Turn*, or if all my Brothers of the Smile, should rally me on the Subject ; I would frankly acknowledge my Error, and as freely sign my Recantation.

Asp. My dear *Theron*, I applaud your Resolution. You have no more Cause to be ashamed of such a Practice, than *Philip* had to be ashamed of the Imperfection in his Limbs. When, being observed to go lame, with a Wound received in Battle, he had this Consolation suggested by one of his Courtiers : “ Never blush, my royal Sir, for a Defect, which

280 DIALOGUE XV.

“ puts You in mind of your *Valour*; every Step You “ take.”—To sacrifice our Prejudices in the Search of Truth, is no less honourable, than to be marked with a Scar, in the Defence of our Country. And never surely was any Prejudice greater than *that*, which pretends, by personal Virtue and Morality, to supersede the Necessity of imputed Righteousness.

I beg Pardon for my Pleasantry. Since you are so very serious, a gay Air was quite unseasonable.— You cannot often complain, that I am guilty of this Fault. Nor can you easily imagine, the Satisfaction I shall enjoy; if, either my Letters, or my Discourse, have administered *any Advantage* to my Friend. I shall note it down, among the distinguished Blessings of my Life; and have an additional Obligation, to love the beneficent AUTHOR of all Good.

But, as I cannot be a Furtherer of your Happiness, without the greatest Delight; so I cannot be a Witness of your Solitude, without a painful Regret. You must therefore permit me to ask the Cause of that unusual *Vehemence*, which I observe in your Speech; and that deep *Concern*, which I read in your Countenance.

Ther. I have been considering very attentively, What is the *present State*, and what is likely to be the *final Condition* of my Soul.

————— *My Hopes and Fears*
Start up alarm'd; and o'er Life's narrow Verge
Look down—on what? A fathomless Abyss,
A vast Eternity!

My Sins, at the same time, like an armed Host, are set in dreadful Array, and surround me on every Side.—*Justice*, like an injured and incensed Foe, unsheaths

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unsheaths the Sword, and makes a loud Demand for Vengeance.—No Righteousness of *my own* presents itself, no Righteousness from the Works of the Law, to which I may fly for Refuge.—The Method of Salvation, in which I formerly confided, is a Bridge *broken down*; and leaves me, without affording any Possibility of Escape, abandoned to the approaching Enemy.

To a Person in such deplorable Circumstances, how reviving, how delightful, is the very Thought of being interested in the great REDEEMER's Righteousness!—I don't wonder now at a Saying of *Luther's*; which I have sometimes exploded, as strangely extravagant: “That, upon the Discovery of this glorious Righteousness, the Gates of Paradise seemed to fly open before Him; and the Dawn of Heaven was all in view.”

Talking in this manner, they came to an elevated Terrace. Which, about an Hour before, had been shaved by the Scythe, and emitted all the Freshness of new-mown Herbage.—On one Side, a fine *Champaign Country* stretched its wide Dimensions.—On the other, a *Flower-Garden* exhibited the last Ornaments of the Year.—Here you might still see the tufted Vermilion, and the full-blown Ivory, glittering through Spangles of liquid Crystal.—There, You might trace the Footsteps of the early Cattle, by many a recent Print on the dewy Lawn.—On the Walls and Espaliers, Autumn had spread her Stores; and was beginning to beautify their Rinds with many a *ruddy Streak*, or to breathe over their glossy Skins her delicate and *inimitable Bloom*.

Asp.

282 DIALOGUE XV.

Asp. See, said *Aspasio*, the Wisdom and Benignity, which, in amiable and inseparable Conjunction, display themselves through the whole Oeconomy of the Universe! *GOD* has made every Thing beautiful in his Time*; every Thing serviceable in its Place. A little while ago, the flowery Meads delighted our Eyes, and the melodious Birds charmed our Ears. Now, the tasteful Fruits are preparing their Dainties; and presenting Us with a Collation, to regale our Palate.—The whole Earth, and all the Seasons, are rich with our CREATOR's Goodness. Yea, the whole Earth, and all that replenishes it, all that surrounds it, are full of his Presence. HE it is, who

*Warms in the Sun, refreshes in the Breeze,
Glows in the Stars, and blossoms in the Trees;
Lives through all Life, extends through all Extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent †.*

An habitual Belief of this Truth, gives Nature her loveliest Aspect, and lends her the most consummate Power to please. The Breath of Violets, and the Blush of Roses; the Music of the Woods, and the Meanders of the Stream; the aspiring Hill, the extended Plain, and all the Decorations of the Landschape; then appear in their highest Attractives; then touch the Soul with the most refined Satisfaction; when *GOD* is seen—when *GOD* is heard—and *GOD* enjoyed in all. — — — — — Is *Theron* lost in Thought, and deprived of Speech? Is He alone silent, while all Things speak their MAKER's Praise?—Does Faith in the Righteousness of *CHRIST* throw a Shade over the Works of Creation? Does it not heighten

* Eceles. iii. 11.

† POPE's *Eth. Epist.*

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—It does ; and to such a Degree, that the *religious*
is the only *true* Philosopher ; nor can the Pleasures
of Imagination ever acquire their proper Relish, till
they are ripened by the Exercise of Devotion.—
With this View then, since my Friend forbears, let
me attempt to speak : not to increase his Know-
ledge, but to beget Faith, and cultivate Devotion
in Us both.

The spacious Canopy * over our Heads, is paint-
ed with Blue ; and the ample Carpet under our
Feet, is tinged with Green. These Colours, by
their *soft* and *cheering* Qualities, yield a perpetual
Refreshment to the Eye †. Whereas, had the
Face of Nature glistered with White, or glowed
with Scarlet ; such ardent and dazling Hues would,
instead of exhilarating, have fatigued the Sight.—
Besides ; as the several brighter Colours are inter-
sprersed, and form the *Pictures* in this magnificent
Piece ; the Green and Blue constitute an admira-
ble

* What *Aspasio* calls the Canopy, *Isaiah* describes by
כרך Which We translate *as a Curtain* ; but the exact
Signification is, *Stcut tenue, vel tenuissimum quid* ; Like
some finely attenuated Expanse. Not like the Curtains
or the Covering of the Tabernacle, which were Goats
Hair and Badgers Skins, shaggy and coarse. But like
some *very fine* Membrane, smooth and elegant, nicely
polished and inimitably delicate. Than which Compa-
rison nothing can more perfectly correspond with the
Aspect of the Sky. *Isai.* xl. 22.

† ————— Gay Green,

Thou smiling Nature's universal Robe !

United Light and Shade ! Where the Sight dwells,

With growing Strength, and ever-new Delight.

THOMSON'S Spring.

ble *Ground*, which shews them all to the utmost Advantage *. To render this fine *Ground* still more agreeable, it is diversified, the Green especially, by a Multitude of intermediate Kinds. From the deepest Verdure, which borders upon Black, even to the palest, which makes a near Approach to Grey.

Had the *Air* been more humid and considerably *thicker*, it would have dimmed the Rays of the Sun, and darkened the chearful Day. The Lungs of all terrestrial Animals, had been clogged in their vital Functions. Men had been suffocated, without the strangling Noose; or drowned, without the over-whelming Flood.—Was it several Degrees more *thin* and subtilized, Birds would not be able to wing their Way through the Firmament; nor could the Clouds be sustained, in so attenuated an Atmosphere. It would want that balmy Softness, which continually feeds the Lamp of Life. It would even elude the Organs of Respiration; and We should gasp for Breath, with as much Difficulty, with as little Success, as Fishes haled from their native Element.

The *Ground* also is wrought into the most proper Temperature. Was it of a *firmer* Consistence, it would be impenetrable to the Plough, and unmanageable by the Spade.—Was it of a *laxer* Com-

position,
* If the Reader has Patience to go through the following Essay. He will find it, in the Issue, not altogether foreign to the main Subject.—If He pleases to consider it, as a kind of *practical Comment*, on that lovely Celebration of providential Goodness, *His tender Mercies are over all his Works*—This may possibly alleviate the Toil of perusing, and reconcile Him to the Length of the Descant.

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position, it would be incapable of supporting its own Furniture. The light Mold would be swept away by whirling Winds; or the oozy Glebe soaked into Sloughs by the descending Rains.—Because, every Situation suits not every Plant; but that which is a Nurse to one, often proves a Step-mother to others; therefore, the Qualities of the Earth are so abundantly diversified, as properly to accommodate every Species of Vegetation. We have a Variety of intermediate Soils, from the *loose* disjointed Sand, to the *stiff* cohesive Clay: from the rough Projections of the *craggy* Cliff, to the softly swelling Bed of the *smooth* Parterre.

The *Sea* carries equal Evidences of a most wise and gracious Ordination.—Was it *larger*, We should want Land for the Purposes of Pasturage, and the Operations of Husbandry. We should be destitute of sufficient Room for Mines and Forests; our subterranean Warehouses, and our aerial Timber-Yards.—Was it *smaller*, it would not be capable of recruiting the Sky, with a proper Quantity of vaporous Exhalations; nor of supplying the Earth with the necessary Quota of fructifying Showers.

Do We not discern very apparent Strokes of Skill, and the most pregnant Proofs of Goodness, in each individual Object? In the various *Tenants* of the Globe, and the several *Appurtenances* of this great Dwelling?—It is needless to expatiate upon the more eminent and conspicuous Beauties; all that *shines* in the Heavens, and all that *smiles* on the Earth. These speak to every Ear, these shew to every Eye, the adorable Munificence of their MAKER.—It is needless to launch into the Praises

Praises of the Valleys, delicately clothed with Herbage; or of the Fields, richly replenished with Corn. Even the *ragged* Rocks, which frown over the Flood; the *caverned* Quarries, which yawn amidst the Land; together with the Mountains, those *shapeless* and *enormous* Protuberances, which seem to load the Ground, and incumber the Skies; even these contribute their Share, to increase the general Pleasure, and augment the general Usefulness. They variegate the Prospect; raise an agreeable Horror in the Beholder; and inspire his Breast with a religious Awe. They add new Charms to the wide Level of our Plains; and shelter, like a Screen, the warm Lap of our Vales.

We are delighted with the solemn Gloom, and magnificent Aspect, of the Forest. One, who saw the Cedars of *Lebanon*, was transported with Admiration, at their ample Trunks, and towering Heads; their diffusive Spread, and verdant Grandeur. Compared with which, the stately Elm is but a Reed; and the branching Oak a mere Shrub *.—Was our Sight qualified for the Search, We should discover a *Symmetry* and a *Dignity*, altogether as perfect, and far more wonderful, in those Groves of *Moss* †, which

* Mr. Maundrel tells Us, He measured one of the Cedars of *Lebanon*, and “found it six and thirty Feet and six Inches thick; its Branches spread an hundred and eleven Feet; its Trunk from the Ground was about sixteen Feet, and then divided into five Branches, each of which would make a large Tree.”

† See, for a Proof of this Remark, the Explanation of the *tenth Plate*, in that very curious, very entertaining, and no less instructive Piece, intitled *Micrographia Restaurata*.—Where our Author compares the Size of this little Vegetable, with the Dimensions of those vast

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which adhere to the rude Stone. We should contemplate, with greater Surprise, if not with greater Rapture, those diminutive Plantations; which strike their hasty Roots in the mouldy Confection, or wave their curious Umbrage over the perished Pickle *.

Who is not charmed with the Vine, and its generous warming Juices? With the Melon, and its delicious cooling Pulp? Yet, were all our Trees to produce Fruits of such exalted Qualities, or of such an agreeable Relish, what would become of the *Birds*? How small a Scantling of such choice Delicacies, would voracious Man resign to their Enjoyment?—That Provision may be made for the meanest *Vagrant* of the Air, as well as for the most renowned Sovereign of a Nation; there is, in all Places, a large Growth of Shrubs, covered annually with a Harvest of coarse and hardy Berries. So *coarse* in their Taste, that they are unworthy of the
Acceptance

Trees, which grow in the vigorous Climates of *Guinea* and *Brazil*. The Trunks of which are, according to the Report of Travelers, twenty Feet in Diameter. Whereas, the Body of this minute Plant, measures no more than the sixtieth Part of an Inch. The Thickness of the former, exceeding that of the latter, 2,985,984 Millions of Times.—So prodigiously various are the Works of the CREATOR.

* That whitish kind of Down, which shags the putrefying Pickle; which incrusts the Surface of some corrupted Liquors; and constitutes what we call *Mouldiness*; is really a Cluster of little Plants. Each has a Root and a Stalk: Each spreads its Branches, and produces Seed in Abundance.

*Radicesque suas habet, exilemque Coronam,
Frondesque, Fructumque gerit, velut ardua Quercus.*

Acceptance of Man : so *hardy* in their Make, that they endure the extremest Severities of the Weather ; and furnish the feathered Tribe with a standing Repast, amidst all the Desolations of Winter.

The Fir, with her silver Bark, and shapely Cone; the Beech *, with her quivering Leaves and embowering Shade ; are stately Decorations of our rural Seats. But, if there were no intangling *Thickets*, no prickly *Thorns*, where would the Farmer procure Fences, so closely wattled, or so strongly armed † ? How could He guard the Scene of his Labours, or secure his vegetable Wealth, from the Flocks

* The *Fir*, the *Beech*, and such like Trees, are called in *Hebrew*, עֲלֵי נָחַל Ifai. vii. 19. Which Word is rendered, but I think very improperly, *Bushes*. It rather signifies the *grand* and most *admired* Plants. It is intended as a Contrast to the coarse and despicable Thorns, mentioned in the preceding Clause. And both taken together express all Sorts of Trees, from the towering Cedar to the groveling Shrub.

† Something to this Purpose is hinted in the Prophecy of *Isaiab*, by יֵרֵאת שִׁמְרִי וְשִׁמְרִי *Terriculamentum Sentium & Veprium* : There shall not come thither, *the Terror of Thorns and Briars*. Meaning those sharp and ragged Mounds, with which Vineyards, Corn-fields, and other cultivated Spots, were usually inclosed. Which deterred the most adventurous Cattle from forcing, or attempting to force, a Passage.—The Words are somewhat obscure, and have been greatly misunderstood. But, thus interpreted, they afford an easy Sense. They perfectly coincide with the Context, which foretels and describes an universal *Desolation*, “ Places, formerly
“ fenced about with Abundance of Care, shall lie ex-
“ posed to every wandering and every mischievous Foot.
“ Tillage shall be discontinued ; and the whole Country
“ degenerate into a confused, disorderly Waste ; with-
“ out either the Distributions of Property, or the Im-
“ provements of Industry.” *Ifai*. vii. 25. Vid. VI-
TRING, *in loc.*

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Flocks and the Herds? Those roving Plunderers, which accede to no Treaty, but that of *forcible* Restraint; submit to no Laws, but those of the *coercive* Kind.

Most People are fond of the Purslane's fleshy Leaves, and the ramified Fatness of the Brocoli: the Potato's mealy Orbs, and the Lentile's succulent Pods. We spare no Toil, We grudge no Expence, to have them flourish in our Gardens, and served up at our Tables.—But there are innumerable Herbs, which pass under the contemptible Character of *Weeds*; and yet are altogether as desirable to many Classes of Creatures, as these culinary Gifts to Mankind. Who shall be at the Pains to plant, to water, to cultivate, such despicable Productions? Man would rather *extripate*, than *propagate*, these Incumbrances of his Acres. Therefore Providence vouchsafes to be their Gardener. Providence has wrought off their Seeds into such a Lightness of Substance, that they are carried abroad with the Undulations of the Air. Or, if too heavy to be wafted by the Breeze, they are fastened to Wings of Down, which facilitate their Flight. Or else, are inclosed in a springy Case; which, forcibly bursting, shoots and spreads them on every Side.—By some such means, the reproducing Principle is disseminated; the universal Granary is filled; and the universal Board furnished. The buzzing Insect, and the creeping Worm, have each his *Bill of Fare*. Each enjoys a never-failing Treat, equivalent to our finest Venison, or to the “Fat of Kidneys of Wheat*.”

As

* *The Fat of Kidneys of Wheat*, Deut. xxxii. 14. A Sentence, rich with Elegance! Such as would have
Vol. III. T shone

As the Seeds of some Plants are most artfully scattered abroad, when ripe ; the Seeds of others are most carefully *guarded*, till they come to Maturity ; and, by both Contrivances, every Species is not barely preserved, but in a manner eternized.—Some are lodged in the Center of a large *Pulp* ; which is, at once, their Defence, and their Nourishment. This We find exemplified in the tasteful Apple, and the juicy Pear.—Some, besides the surrounding Pulp, are inclosed in a thick *Shell*, hard and impenetrable as Stone. We cannot pluck and eat one of those downy Peaches, or incrimsoned Nectarines, which so beautifully emboss the Wall, without finding a Proof of this Precaution.—Cast your Eye upon the Walnuts, which stud the Branches of that spreading Tree. Before these are gathered, the Increase of the Cold, and the Emptiness of the Gardens, will sharpen the Appetite of the Birds. To secure the fine Kernel from the Depredations of their busy assailing Bills, it is fortified with a strong *Inclosure* of Wood, and with the Addition of a disgustful bitter *Rind*.

If *Grass* was as scarce as the *Guernsey-Lily* ; or as difficultly raised as the delicate *Tuberoſe* ; how certainly, and how speedily, must many Millions of

Quadrupeds

shone in *Pindar*, or been admired by *Longinus*. Yet, I believe, its principal Beauty consists, in an Allusion to a remarkable *Jewish* Rite. In every Sacrifice, the Fat of the Kidneys was, as the most delicious Part of the Victim, set apart for GOD, and consumed on his Altar. Here, even the common People were treated like the DEITY. They lay under no Restraint, either from the divine Prohibition, or the Scarcity of the Grain. But were copiously supplied, and freely regaled themselves with the *choicest finest Part* of this first and best of Vegetables.

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Quadrupeds perish with Famine ! Since all the Cattle owe their chief Subsistence to this Vegetable, by a singular Beneficence in the Divine Oeconomy, *it waiteth not*, like the Corn-field and the Garden-bed, for the annual Labours of *Man* *. When once sown, though ever so frequently cropped, it revives with the returning Spring, and flourishes in a kind of perennial Verdure. It covers our Meadows ; diffuses itself over our Plains ; springs up in every Glade of the Forest ; and spreads a Side-board in the most sequestered Nook.

Since the Nutriment of Vegetables themselves, lies hid under the Soil, or floats up and down in the Air: *beneath*, they plunge their Roots † into the Ground, and disperse every Way their fibrous Suckers, to explore the latent, and attract the proper Nourishment: *above*, they expand a Multitude of Leaves †, which, like so many open Mouths, catch the Rains as they fall ; imbibe the Dews as they distil ; and transmit them through their nice Orifices, to the Heart of the Plant, or the Lobes of the Fruit.

I have touched upon the *insensible* Creation ; and pointed out the Care of a condescending Providence, exercised over these lowest Formations of Nature.—The *animal* World, *Theron*, falls to your Share. It is yours, to descant upon those higher Orders of Existence : yours, to shew Us the Goodness of GOD, extending its indulgent Regards to them,

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* Mic. v. 7.

†† *Job* very beautifully refers to these two Sources of vegetable Fertility ; *My Root was spread out by the Waters, and the Dew lay all Night upon my Branch.* *Job* xxix. 19.

6

their Welfare, and all their Interests.—And how pleasing a Speculation must it be, to consider the universal Parent, spreading the Wings of his Benevolence, wide as the Arches of Heaven, over the immense Household of his Creatures! Cherishing all the Families of Earth, and Air and Skies, as tenderly, as officiously, as the Hen* cherishes her infant Brood, when she opens to them her warm Bosom, and covers them with her soft vital Down.

Ther. The Subject is in good Hands. Let *Part the second* be of the same Strain with *Part the first*, and there will be no Occasion to wish for a new Speaker. As to myself I have very little Inclination to talk. But I have an Ear open and attentive to your Discourse.

Asp. You put me in mind of the Philosopher, who presumed to read a Lecture on the Art of War, in the Presence of *Hannibal*. But his Impertinence was *voluntary*, mine is *constrained*.—Since You join me this Office, let Us pass from the vegetable, to the animal World. Here We shall not find any Tribe, nor any Individual neglected. The superior Classes want no Demonstration of their excellent Accomplishments. At the first Glimpse, they challenge our Approbation; they command our Applause. Even the *more ignoble* Forms of animated Existence, are most wisely circumstanced, and most liberally accommodated.

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* This seems to be the Image, to which the Psalmist alludes. *Psal.* cxlv. 9. This is the express Representation, which our SAVIOUR uses. *Matt.* xxiii. 37. And a most amiable Image, as well as a most picturesque Representation, it is.

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They generate in that particular Season, which is sure to supply them with a Stock of Provision, sufficient both for themselves, and their increasing Families.—The Birds lay their Eggs, and hatch their Young, when *Myriads* of new-born, tender Insects swarm on every Side. So that the Caterers, whether they be the male or female Parents, need only to alight on the Ground, or make a little Excursion into the Air; and they meet with a Feast ready drest, and all at free Cost, for the clamant Mouths at home.—If the Sheep are an Exception to this Rule, it is because they are consigned over to the Maintenance and Protection of Man. Because, they are *tame* and will admit, are *valuable* and will recompense, his assiduous Attendance. He therefore, when they yearn, fills their Cribs with Fodder; and this fills their Udders with Milk. The Lambs, hardened by the Cold, become vigorous and lively: and, when their milky Diet fails, they find a Profusion of nutrimental Herbage on the Soil.

Their Love to their Offspring, while they continue in a helpless State, is *invincibly* strong. Whereas, the very Moment they are able to shift for themselves; when the parental Affection would be attended with much Solitude, and productive of no Advantage; it *vanishes*, as though it had never existed.—The Hen, while marching at the Head of her little Brood, would fly in the Eyes of a Mastiff, or even encounter a Lion, in their Defence. Yet, within a few Weeks, this inexpressible Tenderness turns to Indifference. She abandons her Chickens to the wide World, and not so much as knows them any more.

If the GOD of *Israel* inspired *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab* with *Wisdom, and Understanding, and Knowledge in all Manner of Workmanship* * : the GOD of Nature has instructed, has furnished with Skill and Caution, the wild Inhabitants of the Bough. —The *Skill*, with which they erect their Houses, and adjust their Apartments, is inimitable. The *Caution*, with which they secrete their Abodes from the searching Eye, or intruding Foot, is admirable. No General, though fruitful in Expedients, could plan a more artful Concealment. No Architect, with his Rule and Line, could build so commodious a Lodgment.—Give the most celebrated Artificer the same Materials, which these weak and unexperienced Creatures use. Let a *Jones*, or a *De Moivre*, have only some rude Straws or ugly Sticks; a few Bits of Dirt, or Scraps of Hair; a sorry Lock of Wool, or a coarse Sprig of Moss; and what Works, fair with Delicacy, or fit for Service, could *they* produce?

We extol the Commander, who knows how to take Advantage of the Ground. Who can make the Sun and Wind fight for Him, as well as his Troops. And, by every Incident, embarrasses the Forces of the Enemy, but expedites the Action, and facilitates the Success of his own. Does not this Praise belong to our *feathery Leaders*? Who pitch their Tent, or (if you please) fix their penfile Camp, sometimes on those lofty, sometimes on those projecting Branches; that wave in the upper Regions of the Air, or dance over the Eddies of the Stream. By which judicious Disposition, the ver-

* Exod. xxxi. 3.

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nal Gales rock their Cradle, and the murmuring Waters lull their Young. While both these Circumstances, so advantageous to themselves, terrify the Shepherd, and keep the School-Boy at a trembling Distance.—Some hide their little Household from View, amidst the Shelter of intangled Furze. Others remove it from Reach, in the Center of a thorny Thicket. By one Stratagem or another, they are generally as *secure* and *unmolested*, in their feeble Habitations; as the Foxes, which intrench themselves deep in the Earth; or as the Conies, which *make their Houses in the Rock* *.

If the *Swan* has large sweeping Wings, and a copious Stock of Feathers, to spread over her cal- low Brood; the *Wren* makes up by Contrivance, what is deficient in her Bulk.—Small as she is, she intends † to bring forth, and will be obliged to nurse up, a very numerous Issue. Therefore, with the correctest Judgment She designs, and with indefatigable Affiduity finishes, a Nest proper for her Purpose. It is a neat *Rotund*; lengthened into an

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Oval;

* Prov. xxx. 26.

† *Aspasio* has ventured to say, *She intends*—And one is almost tempted to think, from the Preparation which the little Creature makes, that She had really set down, and counted the Cost, and concerted her Scheme. As though she had deliberated with Herself—“ I shall lay, “ not a Couple of Eggs, but near a Score. From these “ I am to produce a House full of Young. But how “ shall I have Warmth (unless Art supply, what Nature “ has denied) sufficient to hatch the Embrios, or cherish “ the Infants?”—The Truth, I believe, is; That, in all her seeming Foresight, and circumspect Behaviour, She acts, She knows not what. Only She acts, what eternal Wisdom knows to be necessary, and what all-con- descending Goodness prompts her to perform.

Oval; bottomed and vaulted with a regular *Concave*. To preserve it from Rain, it has several Coatings of Moss. To defend it from Cold, it has but one Window, and only a single Door; or rather, the Window and the Door are the same. To render it both elegant and comfortable, it has *Carpets* and *Hangings* of the finest softest Down.—By the Help of this curious Mansion, our little Lady becomes the Mother of Multitudes. The vivifying Heat of her Body is, during the Time of Incubation, exceedingly augmented. Her House is like an Oven, and greatly assists in hatching her Young. Which no sooner burst the Shell, than they find themselves screened from the Annoyance of the Weather; and most agreeably reposed, amidst the Ornaments of a Palace, and the Warmth of a Bagnio.

Perhaps, We have been accustomed to look upon the Insects, as so many *rude* Scraps of Creation, and to rank them amongst the *Refuse* of Things. Whereas, if We examine them, without Prejudice, and with a little Attention, they will appear some of the most finished Pieces of divine Workmanship.

Many of them are decked with a Profusion of Finery. Their *Eyes* are an Assemblage * of Microscopes :

* The *common Fly*, for Instance. Who has many natural Enemies; and, by a certain petulant Familiarity, or malapert Officiousness, creates to Herself many more. Whenever She has a Fancy for it, She will take a Lion by his Beard; and makes no Scruple to set her Foot, upon the Nose of a King. On Account of this uncere- monious and blunt Behaviour, every Body quarrels with her. Every Hand and every Foot is lifted up against Her. She

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croscopes : whose Mechanism is inconceivably nice ; whose Polish is exquisitely delicate ; and whose whole Form is touched into the highest Perfection. Their Cloathing has all the Variety and Lustre of Colours. It is set with an Arrangement of Pearl, of Diamonds, and Gold. It is bordered with Fringes, or lined with Furs, richer far than Silks and Velvets. In short ; their Cloathing is not to be equalled, as to Delicacy and Splendour, even by the most brilliant Court : no, not amidst all its Blaze of Gems, and Pomp of Dress.

Their *Wings* are the finest Expansions imaginable. Cambric is mere Canvass, and Lawn is coarse as Sack-cloth, compared with those inimitable Webs. The *Cases*, which inclose their Wings, glitter

She finds no Quarter, from the most generous of Men, or the most harmless of Animals.—Surely then She has Cause to be peculiarly circumspect and vigilant. Yet her Head is so fixed, that it is incapable of *turning*, in order to observe what passes, either behind or around Her.

Under so great a Disadvantage, and amidst such *unparalleled* Dangers, how can She escape Destruction ? It would be absolutely impossible ; had She not an Expedient for her Preservation, altogether as extraordinary, as her Condition is perilous.—PROVIDENCE, surprisngly wise in its Contrivances, and equally bountiful in its Gifts, has furnished Her, not barely with a *Retinue*, but with more than a *Legion* of Eyes. Inasmuch, that a single Fly is supposed to be Mistress of no less than eight thousand. Every one of which is lined with a distinct optic Nerve. Every one of which is a Kind of Centinel, that always keeps an exact Look out ; and is ever ready to apprize her of the least approaching Harm. Or, to speak more plainly, by Means of this costly and amazing Apparatus, the little Creature sees on every Side, with the utmost Ease and with instantaneous Speed ; even without any Motion of the Eye, or any Flexion of the Neck.

glitter with the most glossy Varnish; are scooped into ornamental Flutings; are studded with radiant Spots; or pinked with elegant Holes.—Not any among them but are equiped with Weapons, or endued with Dexterity, which qualify them to seize their Prey, or escape their Foe; to dispatch the Business of their respective Station, and enjoy the Pleasures of their particular Condition.

Now I am in a talking Humour, give me leave to celebrate the Endowments, and assert the Honours of my puny Clients. Yet, not so much to support *their* Credit, as to magnify their *all-gracious* CREATOR.—What? If the Elephant is distinguished by a huge *Proboscis*? His meanest Relations of the reptile Line, are furnished with curious *Antennæ**; remarkable, if not for their enormous Magnitude, yet for their ready Flexibility, and acute Sensation. By which they explore their Way, even in the darkest Road: they discover and avoid, whatever might defile their neat Apparel, or endanger their tender Lives.

Every one admires that majestic Creature, the *Horse*; his graceful Head, and ample Chest; his arching Neck, and flowing Mane; his cleanly turned Limbs, and finely adjusted Motions. With an impetuous Bound, He flings Himself over the Ditch;

* *Antennæ*, are those very slender Parts, which, resembling Horns or Bristles, grow on the Head of various Insects. Serving, as some Naturalists conjecture, for a Sort of *Weapon*, to defend the Eyes when endangered; or acting as a Kind of *Towel*, to wipe them when sullied. Others suppose, that the Creature uses them, as a blind or dim-sighted Man uses his Staff, to examine the Road, and feel out his Way. In Conformity to this Office, they are frequently called *Feelers*.

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Ditch ; and with a rapid Career, pours Himself* through the Plain. With unwearied Application, He carries his Rider from one End of the Country to another ; and with undaunted Bravery, rushes into the fiercest Rage, and amidst the thickest Havock of the Battle.—Yet the *Ant*, in Proportion to its Size, is equally nimble ; equally strong ; and will climb Precipices, which the most courageous Courser dares not attempt to scale.—If the *Snail* is slower in her Motions, She is under no necessity of treading back the Ground, which She has passed. Because, her House is a Part of her traveling Equipage. So that whenever She goes abroad, She is still under her own Roof ; and wherever She straggles, is always at Home.

Let None suppose, that being charged with the Weight of her Apartment, she toils under an oppressive Burthen. No ; the all-wise Projector of this portable Mansion, has given it two very singular Advantages ; an extraordinary Solidity, and an uncommon Lightness. By means of the former, the Inhabitant dwells in Security. By means of the latter, the Habitation is transferred with Ease.—Were her Eyes sunk as low, as the Body which She trails along the Ground, they would yield but little Service, and be exposed to continual Danger. Both these Evils are prevented by an Expedient, which None but a GOD, who is *wonderful in Counsel*, could have devised ; and which
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* *Pours Himself*—This is *Jeremiah's* beautiful and expressive Phrase, *הַשֵּׁן כְּשֵׁן* Chap. viii. 6. Which *Virgil* has been ambitious to imitate ;

————— *Ruuntque effusi Carcere.*

————— *Sese effudere Quadrigæ.*

None but a GOD, who is infinite in Benignity, would have devised for such a Reptile. As the Fly has her *Microscopes*, the Snail has her *Telescopes*. Her Eyes are fixed on the Extremity of four delicately shaped Tubes *. Surpassing, as to curious Contrivance and wonderful Agency, far surpassing, all the Instruments in the Optician's Shop, and every artificial Rarity in *Sloane's Collection*.—These Tubes, terminated with their living Glasses, the dextrous Manager lengthens or contracts, at her Pleasure; straitens like an Arrow, or bends like an Osier. These She sheaths in her Head, when She has no Occasion to use them, nor any Inclination to look about Her. Or else, elevates them to a considerable Height; turns them in any Direction; and applies them to any Object.—*How excellent is thy Loving-Kindness, O GOD! How rich thy Munificence! And both vouchsafed (most amiable Condescension!) even to a crawling Insect! Surely then the Children of Men may reasonably, may confidently put their Trust under the Shadow of thy Wings †.*

But see! The *Eagle* stretches her Pinions, and demands our Notice. The *Eagle* is privileged with Pinions, that out-strip the Wind. Elevated on which, She looks down on all that soars; and sees flying Clouds, and straining Wings, far below. Her optic Nerve so strong, that it meets and sustains

* You are not to imagine, that those Projections, which are commonly called the Snails Horns, are really such. They are four Tubes, with a Glass fixed in the Extremity of each; or they may be called four optic Nerves, ending in as many beautiful Eyes.

See *Nat. Displ.* Vol. I.

† *Psal.* xxxvi. 7.

tains the dazzling Beams of Noon : her wide surveying Glance so *keen*, that, from the most towering Heights, it discerns the smallest Fish, which sculks at the very Bottom of the River.—The *Mole*, 'tis true, is none of your sprightly or exalted Geniuses ; but an humble hardy Drudge. The *Mole*, I am sensible, is no Favourite with Mankind ; but despised and persecuted, as an abominable Outcast. Yet even this poor Outcast, in her groveling and gloomy State, is far from being disregarded by divine Providence. Because she is to dig a Cell in the Earth, and dwell, as it were, in a perpetual Dungeon, her Paws serve her for a Pick-axe and Spade. Her Eye, or rather her visual Speck, is sunk deep into a Socket, that it may suffer no Injury from her rugged Situation : it requires but a very scanty Communication of Light, that she may have no Reason to complain of her darkling Abode. I called her subterranean Habitation a Dungeon ; and some People, perhaps, may think it a Grave. But I revoke the Expression. It yields her all the Safety of a fortified *Castle*, and all the Delight of a decorated *Grot*.

Even the *Spider*, though abhorred by Mankind, is evidently the Care of all-sustaining Heaven. She is to live upon Plunder ; to support Herself, by trepaning the idle, insignificant, fauntering Fly. Suitably to such an Occupation, she possesses a Bag of glutinous Moisture. From this she spins a clammy *Thread*, and weaves it into a tenacious *Net*. Expert as any practised Sportsman, she always spreads it in the most opportune Places. Sensible that her Appearance would create Horror, and deter the Prey from approaching her Snare, when

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watching for Sport, she retires from Sight. But constantly keeps within Distance, so as to receive the very first Intelligence of what passes in the Toils; and be ready to launch, without a Moment's Delay, upon the struggling Captive. And what is very observable, when Winter chills the Earth, and no more Insects ramble amidst the Air, foreseeing that her Labour would be vain, she discontinues her Work, and abandons her Stand.

I must by no means forget the little Monarchy, which inhabits the Hive. The *Bees* are to subsist, not as a lawless Banditti, but as a regular Community. 'Tis theirs, to earn a decent Livelihood by honest Industry; not to glut themselves with Carnage, or enrich themselves by Rapine. For which Purpose, they are actuated by an invariable Inclination to Society. They possess the truest Notions of domestic Oeconomy, and have enacted the wisest Laws for political Government.—Their indulgent CREATOR has made them a Present of all necessary Implements, both for constructing their *Combs*, and for composing their *Honey*. They have each a natural Pannier, with which they bring Home their collected Sweets: and they form for themselves the most commodious Storehouses, in which they deposit their delicious Wares.—Though made for Peace, they know how to use the Sword. They can take up Arms with the utmost Resolution and Intrepidity, when Arms are requisite to guard their Wealth, or repel their Foes.—Without going through a Course of Botany, they can readily distinguish every Plant, which is most likely to yield the Materials proper for their Business. Without serving an Apprenticeship in the Laboratory, they

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are complete Practitioners in the Art of Separation and Refinement. They are aware, without borrowing their Information from an Almanack, that the vernal Gleams, and Summer Suns, continue but for a Season. Mindful of this Admonition *, they improve to the utmost every shining Hour; and lay up a Stock of balmy Treasures, sufficient to supply the whole State, till the Blossoms open afresh, and their flowery Harvest returns.

Let the *Peacock* boast, if he pleases, his elegant Topknot and lofty Mien; his Neck adorned with varying Dyes, and his Train bespangled with a Round of Stars.—Yet let him know, that the despised *Butterfly*, and even the lothed *Catterpillar*, are as sumptuously arrayed as Himself. Their Gems sparkle with as high a Lustre. Their Robes glow with as great a Profusion of Colours. Nay; all their Ornaments have, in Point of Elegance and Delicacy, just the same Superiority to his, as the *Phaeton* engraved on a Connoisseur's Ring †, has to the *Phaeton* carved in a Statuary's Shop.

Does Beauty sit in State on that lordly Bird? She shines in Miniature on the vulgar Insect. Is the Master of this lower Creation, ennobled with the Powers of Reason? The meanest Classes of sensitive Existence, are endued with the Faculty of *Instinct*. Which gives them a Sagacity, that is neither derived from Observation, nor waits for the Finishings of Experience: which, without a Tutor, teaches them all necessary Skill; and enables them, without a Pattern, to perform every needful

* *Venturaeque Hyemis memores, Æstate Laborem
Experiuntur, & in medium quæsitâ reponunt.* VIRG.

† See DERHAM's *Phys. Theol.* B. viii. C. 4.

needful Operation. And, what is far more surprising, never misleads them, either into erroneous Principles, or pernicious Practices : never fails them, in the nicest or most arduous of their Undertakings *.

Can you have Patience to follow me, if I step into a different Element, and just visit the *watery World*?—Not one among the innumerable Myriads, which swim the boundless Ocean, but is watched over by that exalted Eye, whose Smiles irradiate the Heaven of Heavens. Not one, but is supported by that Almighty Hand, which crowns Angels and Archangels with Glory.—The condescending GOD, has not only created, but *beautified* them. He has given the most exact Proportion to their Shape, and the gayest Colours to their Apparel; a polished Smoothness to their Scales, and a remarkable Sleekiness to their Skin. The Eyes of some are surrounded with a scarlet Circle; the Back of others is diversified with crimson Stains. View them, when they glance along the Stream, or while they are fresh from their native Brine; and the burnished Silver is not more bright, the radiant Rainbow is scarce more glowing, than their vivid, glittering, glossy Hues.

Yet, notwithstanding the Finery of their Apparel, We are under painful Apprehensions for their Welfare.—How can the poor Creatures live, amidst the suffocating Waters?—As they have neither Hands, nor Feet, nor Wings, how can they

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* *In his, says Pliny, speaking of Insects, tam parvis atque nullis, quæ Ratio, quanta Vis, quam inextricabilis Perfectio!*

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VOL. II.

transact their Affairs, or how escape their Enemies ?
 —We are soon freed from our Fears by observing, that they all possess the beneficial, as well as ornamental Furniture of *Fins*. These, when expanded, like Masts above, and Ballast below, poise their floating Bodies, and keep them steadily upright.— We observe, with farther Satisfaction, the *flexible* Play, and *vigorous* Activity of their Tails. With which they turn short ; spring forwards ; and shoot themselves through the Paths of the Sea, more swiftly than Sails and Oars can waft the Royal Yatch.—But we are lost in Wonder, at the exquisite Contrivance, and delicate Formation of their *Gills*. By which they are accommodated, even in that dense Medium, with the Power of Breathing, and the Benefits of Respiration. A Piece of Mechanism this, indulged to the meanest of the Fry ; yet surpassing, infinitely surpassing, in the Fineness of its Structure, and the Facility of its Operation, whatever is curious in the Works of Art, or commodious in the Palaces of Princes.

Ther. Some Persons, *Aspasio*, have the Art of giving *Dignity* to trivial, and *Spirit* to jejune Topics. I cannot but listen, with a pleased Attention, to your Discourse ; though it descends to the lowest Scenes, and meanest Productions of Nature.— To make such philosophical Remarks, was usually my Province ; to add the religious Improvement, yours. But my Thoughts, at present, are wholly taken up with the Consideration of my SAVIOUR's Righteousness. I can hardly turn my Views, or divert my Speech, to any other Subject. All those amiable Appearances of the external

VOL. III. U nal

nal Creation, which I was wont to contemplate with Rapture, afford but a languid Entertainment to my Mind.—Till my Interest in this Divine REDEEMER is ascertained, the Spring may bloom; the Summer shine; and Autumn swell with Fruits: but it will be Winter, cheerless, gloomy, desolate *Winter* in my Soul.

Asp. You say, *Theron*, You attended to my curatory Hints. Then, your own superior Discernment could not but perceive, how every Part of the exterior World is adjusted, in the most excellent and gracious Manner.—Not the *coarsest* Piece of inactive Matter, but bears the Impress of its MAKER's fashioning Skill. Not a *single* Creature, however insignificant, but exhibits evident Demonstrations of his providential Care. His Hand is liberal, profusely liberal, to all that breathes, and all that has a Being.

Let me only ask—and to introduce this Question, with the greater Propriety; to give it a more forcible Energy on our Minds; was the principal Design of the preceding Remarks—Let me ask; *Does GOD take Care for Oxen**? Is He a generous Benefactor to the meanest Animals, to the lowest Reptiles? Are his munificent Regards extended farther still, and vouchsafed even to the most abject worthless Vegetables? And shall they be withheld from *You*, my dear Friend, or from *me*?—Not one among all the numberless Productions, which tread the Ground, or stand rooted to the Soil, wants any Convenience, that is proper for its respective State. And will his heavenly FATHER deny *Theron*

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* 1 Cor. ix. 9.

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what is so necessary to his present Comfort, and his final Happiness? Impossible *!

Ther. I wish for, but I can hardly hope to partake of, that spiritual Blessing; which always included my whole Happiness, and now ingrosses my whole Concern.

Ass. *Not hope to partake of!*—What Pretence, what Shadow of Foundation, has this desponding Temper, either in Reason, or in Scripture? Is it not evident from the whole Book of Revelation? Is it not apparent, through the whole Compass of Nature? That the Almighty LORD, “who governeth the World with the Palm of his Hand†,” is remote, infinitely remote, from a niggardly Disposition. He not only provideth for the Wants, but even *satisfieth the Desire of every living Thing* ‡.

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Consider

* I know not how to forbear transcribing a Paragraph, from one of our periodical Papers; which contains a Proposal for *adapting* natural Philosophy to the Capacity of *Children*. Wishing, at the same time, that the ingenious Author would enlarge his Sketch into a Treatise; and execute the Plan, which He has so judiciously projected, and of which he has given Us so delicate a Specimen.

After some Remarks on the Sagacity of Birds, their Industry, and other surprising Properties, He adds;—“Is it for Birds, O LORD, that Thou hast joined together so many Miracles, which they have no Knowledge of? Is it for Men who give no Attention to them? Is it for the Curious, who are satisfied with admiring, without raising their Thoughts to Thee? Or is it not rather visible, that thy Design has been to call Us to thyself, by such a Spectacle? To make Us sensible of thy Providence and infinite Wisdom; and to fill Us with *Confidence*, in thy Bounty, who watchest, with so much Care and Tendernefs, over Birds, though “two of them are sold but for a Farthing?”

† Eccles. xviii. 3.

‡ Psal. cxlv. 16.

Consider those stately *Poppies*, which are now the principal Ornament of the Garden. They have no Tongue to request the least Favour. Yet the ever-gracious MAKER, clothes them from his own Wardrobe, and decks them with exquisite Beauty.—Observe the *young Ravens*, which sit carelessly croaking on yonder Boughs. Do they cry * for Food? It is in hoarse unarticulate Accents. Yet the all-supporting GOD, hears Meaning in their Noise; and supplies their every Need, from his own spontaneous Bounty.—If He accommodates the former, though incapable of asking; if He attends to the latter, though insensible of their Benefactor; can He *disregard* our pressing Wants? Will He *reject* our earnest Petitions? Especially, when We seek such pure and exalted Gifts, as it is both his Delight and his Honour to bestow.

O! my Friend, look abroad into universal Nature, and look away every disquieting Thought.

Ther. Did You inquire what Pretence I have for this desponding Temper? Alas! I have more than a Pretence. I have a Reason. A Reason too obvious; my great *Unworthiness*!

Asp. Pray where was the Worthiness of the stiff-necked *Israelites*? Yet the LORD *bare them*, and *carried them*, *all the Days of old* †.—Where was the Worthiness of *Saul* the Blasphemer? Yet the blessed JESUS made Him a chosen Vessel, and set Him as a Signet on his Right-hand.—You deserve nothing at the Hand of GOD our SAVIOUR. And what did *Joseph's* Brethren deserve from the Viceroy of *Egypt*? Yet he delivered *them* from Famine, who sold *Him* to Slavery. He settled them

* Psal. cxlvii. 9.

† Isai. lxii. 9.

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in the choicest Territories, who cast Him into the horrible Pit. He shewed Himself a Friend and a Father to those unnatural Relations; who were his actual Betrayers, and his intentional Murderers.— And can You persuade yourself, will You harbour a Suspicion, that *CHRIST* is less compassionate than *Joseph*? Shall a frail Mortal out-vie *IMMANUEL* in Beneficence?

Ther. Is not *some* Righteousness of our own indispensibly required, in order to our Participation of the Righteousness of *CHRIST*.

Asp. Yes, such a Righteousness as *Zaccheus* the Publican, or the *Philippian* Jailor possessed.— *Zaccheus* was a Man of infamous Character, and Chief among the Extortioners. The Jailor was a barbarous Persecutor, and in Purpose a Self-murderer. Yet our *LORD* says to the former; *This Day*, without enjoining any Course of previous Preparation; this very Day, *will I abide at thy House*. And bring even to such a scandalous* Dwelling, impart even to its profligate† Owner, my great Salvation. *St. Paul* directs the latter, without insisting upon any antecedent Duty or Reformation, to *believe on the LORD JESUS*. And assures the poor Sinner, trembling on the very Brink of Despair, that, in so doing, *He shall be saved*.

U 3

“ Thus,

* *Scandalous*—For the Neighbours say, on this Occasion, *He is gone to be Guest with a Man, that is a Sinner*; a notorious Sinner. See the Import of *αμαρτωλος*, in such a Connection, *Luke vii. 37*.

† *Profligate*—Neither is this too severe a Censure on *Zaccheus*. Because, none but an abandoned shameless Wretch—No Son of *Abraham*, till He was lost to all Sense of Decency, would undertake the Office, which the chief of the *Publicans* exercised.

310 DIALOGUE XV.

“ Thus, might He have added, was I myself
 “ saved. Not while I was exercising Righteous-
 “ ness; not when I had obtained Righteousness;
 “ but in the very midst of my Ungodliness and
 “ Cruelty. While I was *breathing out Threatnings*
 “ *and Slaughter*, against the Disciples of my LORD;
 “ nay, when I was *drawing nigh to Damascus*, and
 “ upon the Point of executing the most diabolical
 “ Designs.”

Are not these remarkable Cases, so many *Acts*
and Precedents of the Court of Heaven? Were they
 not recorded for our Observation, Imitation, and
 Comfort?—If so, nothing is required, in order to
 our Participation of *CHRIST* and his Benefits,
 but only that We *receive them*. Receive them, as
 the freest of Gifts, or as Matter of mere Grace,
 vouchsafed to the most Unworthy.

Ther. Is it not necessary, that We have, at least,
 a Conviction of our Need of these Benefits, and a
 Sense of their unspeakable Worth?

Asp. Not as the Condition of our enjoying them.
 Not as giving Us a Warrant to claim or possess
 them. The proper Business of such Convictions
 is only to act as *Stimulatives*; exciting Us, earnestly
 to covet, gladly to receive, the unspeakably need-
 ful Gifts.—*Come*; only come; is our MAS-
 TER's Language. Without staying to acquire
 any goodly Qualities, is his Meaning.—Our RE-
 DEEMER and his Benefits, are like a free Port.
 You enter, without paying any Duty. And though
 the Plague, the Plague of Guilt be in your Vessel.
 You need not stay to perform Quarantine; no, no
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DIALOGUE XV. 311

Ther. Surely, to come without any Holiness, without any *decent* Preparative, must be a gross *Indignity* to the Divine *JESUS*. Whoever presents a Petition to any earthly Sovereign, will think it absolutely necessary, not to appear in a slovenly *Desthabille*, much less in filthy Raiment. Does not our *LORD* Himself, in the Parable of the Wedding-Garment, inculcate this very Point, and caution Us against a presumptuous Approach?

Asp. In this Parable, *CHRIST* is both the Bridegroom, the Feast, and the Wedding-Garment.* And *who* are invited to an Union with this Bridegroom? To be Guests at this Feast? To be arrayed with this Wedding-Garment?—The Messengers are sent, not to the Mansion-houses of the Rich, or the Palaces of the Mighty; but to the *High-ways and Hedges*. Where Misery mourns; and Poverty pines; and Baseness hides her Head.—To *whom* is their Message addressed? Not to the Amiable or Accomplished. But to the *Poor*, the *Maimed*, the *Halt*, the *Blind* †. Persons, who have no recommending Endowments, but every *lothesome* and *disgustful* Property. Yet these (mark the Passage, my Friend; mark well the encouraging Circumstance) *these* are not only allowed, but intreated—importuned—and, by all the Arts of Persuasion, by every weighty or winning Motive, *compelled to come in*.—After all this, surely, it cannot be an Act of Presumption to accept, but must be a Breach of Duty to refuse the Invitation.

U 4

Ther.

* *Matt. xxii. 11. Hæc Vestis est Justitia CHRISTI.*
BENEF. in Loc.

† *Luke xiv. 21.*

Ther. You take no Notice of the Man, who was found without a Wedding-Garment. Which is by far the most *alarming* Incident, and that which gives me no small Uneasiness.

Asp. And 'does my *Theron* take proper Notice of the Divine Declaration? *I have prepared my Dinner*, says the KING eternal. *All Things are ready**. "Whatever is necessary for the Justification, the Holiness, the complete Salvation of Sinners, is provided in the Merit and the Grace of my SON. Let them come therefore, as to a nuptial Banquet; and freely enjoy my Munificence; and feast their Souls with the royal Provision."

The Man without a Wedding-Garment, denotes the specious *superficial* Professor; who is called by *CHRIST*'s Name, but has never put on *CHRIST* *JESUS* by Faith.—Shall I tell You more plainly, whom this Character represents? You yourself, my dear *Theron*, was, some Months ago, in the State of this unhappy Creature. When You trusted in Yourself, and thought highly of your own, thought meanly of your SAVIOUR's Righteousness.—If your former Mistakes made you resemble Him, like a Partner or a Brother; take Heed, lest your present Objections rank You in the Number of his Neighbours or Cousins.

Let Us imitate a better Example. Imitate the returning Prodigal. He came, with no Recommendation, either of Dress, of Person, or of Character. None but his Nakedness, his Misery, and an Acknowledgment of Vileness, which had every aggravating, not one extenuating Circumstance. Yet He was received—received with Indulgence—received with

* Matt. xxii. 4.

DIALOGUE XV. 313

with Careffes—and, without staying to provide any handsome Apparel of his own, was cloathed with that *best Robe*, the Robe of a SAVIOUR's Righteousness.

Let Us accustom Ourselves to consider this incomparable Robe, under its proper evangelical Character. It is not a Matter of Bargain, nor the Subject of Sale, but a Gift. *The Gift of Righteousness*, says the Apostle. And Gifts, We all agree, are not to be *purchased*, but *received*.—That We may not unaccountably neglect, what We so perfectly know, the Parable You mention, is a strong, standing, seasonable Admonition. It teaches Us another Kind of Fear, than that which has alarmed your Mind. It teaches Us to fear, lest, by *not accepting* this sacred Gift, We incur the divine Displeasure.

Ther. How, *Aspasio* ! Can this be the Sense of the Passage ?

Asp. The Guests, You know, consisted of poor Outcasts. They were collected from the Highways and Hedges. Now We cannot suppose, that People in such Circumstances, from such a Situation, and coming at a Minute's Warning, should be able to furnish themselves with a Dress, suitable to the grand Occasion. We must therefore suppose, (which is very conformable to the *eastern* Customs) that the King had ordered his Servants, to accommodate each Guest from the royal Wardrobe. That each might have this additional Token of his Sovereign's Favour; and all might be arrayed in a Manner, becoming the Magnificence of the Solemnity.—The unhappy Person, who *was bound Hand and Foot, and cast into outer Darknefs*, had, no Doubt,

Doubt, an Offer of the nuptial Suit. But He refused, either to receive it, or to wear it; and rudely made his Appearance in his own Garments. Which, however they might comport with his private Station, or answer his personal Conveniencies, were infinitely too mean for this illustrious Ceremony.—The King, resenting such a Behaviour, as an Insult on his Majesty, and a Contempt of his Bounty, most justly condemned the negligent and disdainful Wretch to a severe Punishment. A Punishment, You will observe, not for the *Commission* of former Iniquities, but for the *Refusal* of present Grace.

Ther. “The Refusal of present Grace!” Is this the only Crime, with which You can suppose Him or me chargeable?

Asp. Not the only, but it is the most provoking, and the most destructive Crime.

Ther. Is nothing then, nothing to be done on our Part?

Asp. You are an Admirer of Nature, *Theron*. Read your favourite Book, or hear your favourite Author.

*Nature is christian, preaches to Mankind,
And bids dead Matter aid Us in our Creed.*

Ther. Explain yourself, *Aspasio*. I should be glad to find in the Volume of Nature, any Thing adapted to remove my Distress, and encourage my Hopes.

Asp. When the ALMIGHTY made Man, and placed Him in this habitable World, did He say? “Here is a Dwelling-place, furnish yourself
“with Accommodations. Here are Materials; let
“your own Skill form the Trees, the Fruits, the
“Grain.”

"Grain."—Or did He say? "Here they are, ready formed to your Hand; only do something, in order to qualify Yourselves for them, or entitle Yourselves to them."—No; his Language was; "They are fully prepared. You are welcome to make Use of them all. They are my free Gift to my needy Creatures."

In like Manner, when He sent his SON into the World, to make the Atonement for Sin, and to work the justifying Righteousness, He said not to fallen Man; "Do your Part in this grand Business. At least make Yourself, in some Degree, meet for these Benefits."—No; but He spoke, or rather now speaks in the Gospel, to this Effect. "The Work is all done; with a Perfection that is absolute, and admits of no Addition. The Benefits are, not to distinguish Merit, but to recover the Ruined. Therefore, as ruined, undeserving, guilty Creatures, You are welcome to apply and enjoy them all."

Ther. What! Is not Heavenly-mindedness to be exercised? No Victory over our Lusts gained? No Fruits of Sanctification produced?

Asp. These legal Apprehensions! How closely they cleave to my *Tberon's* Mind! But I hope, the Word of GOD, which pierceth to the dividing asunder the Soul and Spirit, will give the severing Blow.—And what says that sacred Word? It describes the Gospel, as a *Will* or *Testament**; and all

* *Heb. ix. 16, 17.* This Notion not only runs through the Scriptures, but stands conspicuous even in their Title Page.—What are they called? THE OLD and THE NEW TESTAMENT.—What is a Testament? An authentic

all its glorious Blessings, as *Legacies* bequeathed by the dying *JESUS*.—When your old Acquaintance *Charicles*, left You a handsome Legacy; what did you *do*, to establish your Title, and make it your own?

Ther. My Title was pre-established, by my Friend's Donation. I had nothing to do, but to claim, to accept, and to possess.

Asp. Do the very same, in the present Case. *CHRIST*, having merited Pardon, and obtained eternal Redemption, made his last Will, and recorded it in the New Testament. There He disposes of those unsearchable Riches. And who are his *Legatees*? Not the Holy or the Heavenly minded, but Sinners, lost Sinners of Mankind. Under *this* Character, You are to claim, accept, and possess the great *TESTATOR's* Beneficence.—Sure you cannot suppose, that *CHRIST's* Kindness is less sincere, or that *CHRIST's* Donations are less valid, than those of an earthly Defunct.

Ther. This Illustration hardly reaches the Point. I speak not of doing any Thing, under the Notion of *Merit*, but of *Qualification*. That which may, not entitle Us to *CHRIST*, but only prepare our Way to Him.

Asp.

thentic Deed, in which Estates are transmitted, and Legacies bequeathed. In other Testaments, some *earthly* Possession; in this, the *heavenly* Patrimony, even all the Riches of Grace, and the everlasting Inheritance of Glory. Did we consider the Scriptures in this Light, it would be a most engaging Invitation, to search them with Affiduity and Pleasure. What Child is willing to continue ignorant of a deceased Parent's last Will and Testament? Who does not covet to know, what Honours, Hereditaments, and Wealth devolve to his Enjoyment, by such an interesting and venerable Conveyance?

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Asp. By such Notions, instead of preparing your Way to *CHRIST*, You fill it with Stumbling-blocks, Precipices, and deep Pits.—As to Qualification, if there be any such Thing, it is our extreme Indigence; and this, I presume, you are not without. Other Qualification, neither Reason prescribes, nor Scripture requires.

Reason prescribes no other.—The Gifts of the eternal *SOVEREIGN* are intended, not to recognize our imaginary Worth, but to aggrandize our Ideas of his immense Liberality. They are intended to shew forth the exceeding Riches of his Goodness; which pardons and saves, not only without Merit, but against Demerit. To answer such a Design, the Unworthy and the Sinners are duly qualified; nay, are the *only* qualified Persons.

Scripture requires no other.—The ever-merciful *SAVIOUR* says not; They are unqualified for my Salvation. They have no valuable or noble Acquirements. But this is his tender Complaint; *They will not come to me*, just as they are; with all their Sins about them; with all their Guilt upon them; *that they may have Life* *.

Pray, take Notice of this Text; and you will see Things placed in a new Light. You will behold *CHRIST* under a new Character, and his Benefits ranged in a new Order. Sanctification, Heavenly-mindedness, and a Victory over our Lusts, are not the Qualities which He *requires*, but the Blessings which He *confers*. Not what We bring to Him, as introductory Conditions; but what We receive from Him, as the Fruit of his Sufferings, and the Effect of his Grace.

Ther.

* John v. 40.

Ther. "The Unworthy and Sinners, the only *qualified!*" Of this Expression I cannot but take particular Notice.—Then *Judas* should stand in the first Rank of qualified Persons! While the devout Centurion, whose Prayers and Alms came up as a Memorial before GOD, must thereby be unqualified for the Favour of Heaven.

Asp. If you observed my Expression, I spoke in the hypothetical Manner*. Made a Supposition, rather than advanced an Assertion. If there be any Qualification, this is the only one. But strictly speaking, there is no such Thing. The impulsive or inclining Cause of all GOD's Favour shewn, of all GOD's Goodness exercised, is—from the Creature? No; but from *Himself*, Himself alone. He has Mercy, not because this or that Person is amiable, is meet, or qualified, but *because he will have Mercy*.—As for our Need of Mercy and Reconciliation, arising from a State of Sinfulness, this can no more constitute a *real* Qualification for the Blessings, than an Act of Rebellion can qualify for the first Honours of the State.

But this We must allow; That such Need, such Misery, such Sinfulness, illustrate the *Freeeness*, and manifest the *Riches* of Grace. This also We should never forget, that GOD's first and leading Purpose,

* If the Reader should think, that *Theron's* Objection is not fully answered, the Deficiency may, in this Manner, be supplied.—*Judas* was sufficiently qualified, as a *lost* Sinner; but He refused the Grace, through Distrust and Despair. *Cornelius*, instead of being unqualified for, was an actual Partaker of divine Grace. Which inclined Him to offer up Sacrifices of *Acknowledgment*, after He had relied on the only Sacrifice of *Atonement*. See Vol. I. page 285.

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pose, in all his favourable Dispensations to fallen Man, is, to demonstrate the Sovereignty, and display the Glory of his Grace.—The LORD, promising a very extraordinary Deliverance to *Israel*; promising all the Blessings of the new Covenant, says; *not for your Sakes, be it known unto You, do I this* * signal Act of Kindness.—For Ye have disobeyed me in your own Land, and dishonoured me among the Heathen.—What then is the Inducement? We find it in the following Declaration; *I, even I am HE, that blotteth out your Transgressions for my own Sake* †. Because, I am unspeakably kind. Because, I delight in Loving-kindness, and have Pleasure in the Salvation of Sinners.—What is the End of all? It is FOR THE PRAISE OF THE GLORY OF HIS GRACE ‡. A proper Motto for all the Displays of divine Benevolence to sinful Creatures. Especially, for the Gift of a perfect and everlasting Righteousness. Which is, to Man the Blessing of Blessings; and to GOD, the Glory of Glories.

Ther. This is a Gift indeed!—To be interested in all the Merits of *CHRIST*! To have his immaculate Righteousness imputed to my Soul!—So that from henceforth there shall be no Fear of Condemnation, but a comfortable Enjoyment of freest Love, and a delightful Expectation of completest Glory!

Asp. Admirably spoken! Of all these Blessings *CHRIST*'s Righteousness is truly meritorious, and certainly productive. And why should You not, by receiving the latter, enjoy the former? Why should Diffidence, like a malignant Spectre, haunt

* Ezek. xxxvi. 32. † Isai. xliii. 25. ‡ Eph. i. 6.

haunt your Thoughts ; thwart your Paths ; and hold back or unnerve your Hand ?

If this rich Donation, surpass your very Thoughts, and fill You with grateful Astonishment ; it is so much the better adapted to exemplify, what the Scripture very emphatically styles, the *abundant*, the *superabundant*, the *exceeding abundant* * Grace of our GOD.—GOD is a boundless Ocean of Love ; ever flowing, yet absolutely inexhaustible. See ! What an innumerable Variety of Benefits, are transmitted from yonder Sun, to gladden all the Regions of Nature ! Yet the Sun is but a *Spark* ; its highest Splendor, no more than a *Shade* ; its uninterrupted and most profuse Communications of Light, a poor diminutive *Scantling* ; compared with the Riches of Divine *Benignity*.

The Servant in the Parable, who owed ten thousand Talents †, craved only some merciful Forbearance. Whereas, his generous Lord remitted the whole Sum, and gave him an Acquittance in full ; *I forgave Thee all that Debt* ‡.—You wonder, and very deservedly, at such vast Generosity. But, what had been your Admiration, if You had seen the noble Master admitting this obnoxious Slave,

* Υπερβαλλουσα χαρις. 2 Cor. ix. 14.—Υπερπερισσευουσα χαρις. Rom. v. 20.—Υπερπελεονασει η χαρις. 2 Tim. i. 14.

† If these were Talents of Gold, the Sum would amount to *Seventy-two Millions* Sterling. If only Talents of Silver, the Debt would have been *four Millions, four hundred thousand Pounds*. Hereby our LORD most significantly intimates the vast Number, and the enormous Magnitude, of our Offences against GOD ; together with our utter Incapacity, of making any Satisfaction ; and his most magnificent Grace, in freely forgiving all,

‡ Matt. xviii. 32.

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to a Share in his Dignity? What, if he had made so worthless a Wretch, the Child of his Family, and the Heir of his Estate? This, You are ready to say, would exceed the Bounds of Credibility. Yet GOD Almighty's stupendous Beneficence exceeds all this. He not only spares guilty Creatures, but makes them his *Children*; makes them *Inheritors* of his Kingdom; and, as an Introduction to all, or rather as the Crown of all, makes them *Partakers* * of his SON.

Ther. The Gift is inestimable; of more Value than all Worlds. It will render me blessed and happy, Now and for Ever,

Asp. Then it is perfectly agreeable to the glorious Gospel of the blessed GOD. Hear, what the first Writer † in the Christian Church says, upon this charming Subject.—“ The Gospel comprehends, a
“ Discharge from Punishment; a Remission of
“ Sins; the Gift of Righteousness; the Endow-
“ ment of Sanctification; Redemption from every
“ Evil; the Adoption of Sons; the Inheritance
“ of Heaven; and a most endeared, a conjugal
“ Relation to the infinitely majestic SON of
“ GOD. All these divinely precious Privileges
“ preached, presented, vouchsafed, to the Fool-
“ ish, to the Disobedient, to Enemies.”

VOL. III.

X

Ther.

* Heb. iii. 14.

† *St. Chrysostom*, describing the Office of a Preacher or Evangelist, thus expresses Himself. *Και γαρ κολασίως καταγγέλλειν, και αμαρτηματων λυσι, και δικαιωσιν, και αγιασμον, και απολυτρωσιν, και υιοθεσιαν, και κληρονομιαν των βραβων, και συγγενειαν προς τον υιον τε Θεου πασιν ηλθεν απαγγελων, τοις εχθροις, τοις αδικουσιν, τοις εν σκολω καθημενοις.* Vol. II. pag. 2. Edit. Savil.

Ther. May such unworthy Persons look for Blessings, so superlatively excellent?

Asp. Unworthy!—My dear Friend, dwell no longer on that obsolete Topic. Remember the poor ragged Creatures, that sat shivering and starved under the Hedges. Were *they* worthy to receive an Invitation, *they* worthy to be allowed Admission, to a magnificent Court and a royal Banquet?

Affure Yourself, the greatest Unworthiness is no Objection in GOD's Account. Since He never looks at any Thing *amiable* in the Creature, that may engage Him to shew Mercy; nor yet at any Thing *abominable* in the Creature, that may with-hold Him from shewing Mercy. Not for your Sake, but *for my own Sake*, is his invariable Decree.

With regard to Worthiness, this is as much disavowed by the Gospel, as *equivocal* * Generation is exploded by the modern Philosophy. The Gospel being a gracious Provision, made, by the supreme royal Prerogative, for the Relief of the *Ruined*, and the Salvation of the *Ungodly*.

Nay; this Notion of yours is diametrically *contrary* to the Gospel, and totally *subversive* of the Covenant of Grace.

Ther. In what Respect?

Asp.

* The *Ancients* imagined, that many Vegetables and Insects were produced by, I know not what, plastic Power in the Sun and other Elements. This is called *equivocal* Generation.—Whereas, the *modern* Philosophers maintain, that every Individual of this Kind, derives its Being from some Parent-Vegetable or Parent-Animal. This is styled *univocal* Generation.—The former Opinion is now universally rejected, as irrational, chimerical, and to the last Degree unphilosophical.

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Asp. Because it would make our own Duty and Obedience the Terms. Whereas, the Terms were *CHRIST*'s Suffering, and *CHRIST*'s Obedience. *These* are the Hinge on which that great Transaction turns, and on which the Hope of the World hangs.

Ther. Be more particular, *Aspasio*.

Asp. The first Covenant was made with *Adam*, for Himself and for Us. Breaking it, He lost his original Righteousness, and became subject to Death. Became at once a *Bankrupt* and a *Rebel*. In this Guilt, in this Misery, We and all his Posterity shared.—Now you cannot suppose, that the Almighty *MAJESTY* would enter into a fresh Covenant, with an *insolvent* and *attainted* Creature. It pleased, therefore, the *SECOND PERSON* of the adorable *TRINITY*, to undertake our Cause; to become our Surety; and put Himself in our Stead. *With Him* the second Covenant was made. He was charged with the Performance of the Conditions; thereby to obtain Pardon and Righteousness, Grace and Glory, for all his People. *I have made a Covenant*, says the *LORD JEHOVAH*, not with fallen *Adam*, or any of his guilty Race, *but with my CHOSEN ONE**. And the Terms were (You will permit

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* *Psal.* lxxxix. 3. It is generally allowed, that this Psalm, in its *sublimest* Sense, is referable to *CHRIST*; and, in its *full* Extent, is referable *only* unto *CHRIST*. If so, I think, it would be more significant and emphatical, to render בְּחִירִי *My CHOSEN ONE*.—This will furnish out a very clear and cogent Argument to prove, that the Covenant of Grace was made, not with Us, our Ancestors or Successors, but with the *LORD JESUS*

me to repeat the momentous Truth) not your Worthiness or mine, but the Incarnation, the Obedience, the Death of GOD's ever-blessed SON.

Ther. Has Man then no Office assigned, no Part to act, in the Covenant of Grace?

Asp. He has: but it is a Part, which my Friend seems very loth to discharge. His Part is to *accept* the Blessings, fully purchased by the SAVIOUR, and freely presented to the Sinner. His Part is, not to dishonour the REDEEMER's gracious Interposition, and infinitely sufficient Performance, by pretending to any Merit of his own. His Part (why will You constrain me to reiterate in this Manner?) is, not to bring Money in his Hand, with the ten Brethren; but, with an empty Hand, and like an impoverished *Lazarus*, to take hold of GOD's Covenant*.

Ther. If this be the Nature of the New Covenant, I must confess, that I have hitherto been ignorant of it, and of the Gospel.

Asp. And from hence arises your present Distress. To this, not to your Unworthiness, but to *this* I ascribe your Perplexity and Anguish.—You are a Philosopher, *Theron*; and have been accustomed to examine the Proportion of Objects, rather than

to *JESUS CHRIST* in our Name. Just such an Argument as the Apostle uses, to convince the *Galatians*, That the Promises of the Covenant were made to the same Divine PERSON, *Gal. iii. 16*.—From both which Premises this important Conclusion follows; That Justification and every spiritual Blessing are the Fruit of *CHRIST*'s Obedience; are lodged in Him as the great *Proprietary*; are *communicated* to Sinners, only through *Faith*, or in a Way of Believing. See *Zech. ix. 11*,

* *Isai. lvi. 4*.

to weigh then in the Balance of the Sanctuary. Here, you find such Accounts of divine Grace, and such Distributions of divine Favour, as break through and supersede all the Rules of Equity and Proportion, maintained among Men. This quite overthrows your Conclusions, drawn from the *Fitness* of Things.—Overthrows, did I say? Let me correct myself. Is it not fit, highly fit, that We should, however unworthy in Ourselves, magnify the Grace of our GOD?

Ther. Most certainly.

Asp. How can this be done, but by expecting great and superlatively precious Blessings from his Hand?—*Alexander*, You know, had a famous, but indigent Philosopher, in his Court. Our Adept in Science, was once particularly straitened in his Circumstances. To whom should He apply, but to his Patron, the Conqueror of the World? His Request was no sooner made, than granted. *Alexander* gave Him a Commission, to receive of his Treasurer whatever He wanted. He immediately demands, in his Sovereign's Name, ten thousand Pounds.—The Treasurer, surprised at so large a Demand, refuses to comply: but waits upon the King, and represents the Affair. Adding withal, how unreasonable He thought the Petition, and how exorbitant the Sum.—*Alexander* heard Him with Patience. But, as soon as He had ended his Remonstrance, replied; “Let the Money be instantly paid. I am delighted with this Philosopher's way of thinking. He has done me a singular Honour. By the Largeness of his Request, He shews the high Idea He has con-

“ceived, both of my superior Wealth, and my
“royal Munificence.”

Thus, my dear *Theron*, let Us honour, what the inspired Penman styles, *The marvelous Loving-kindness of JEHOVAH*. From the King, *whose Name is the LORD of Hosts*, let Us expect—I say not, what corresponds with our low Models of Generosity—I say not, what We suppose proportioned to our fancied Deserts—but what is suitable to the unknown Magnificence of his Name, and the unbounded Benevolence of his Heart. Let Us expect such divinely rich Blessings, as surpass all created Power, and all human Apprehension. Then We shall no longer be afraid, assuredly to trust that gracious Declaration, *JESUS CHRIST is made of GOD unto Us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption*. *JESUS CHRIST* hath given Himself for Us, and *does* give Himself to Us; together with all the Blessings of his Purchase, from the Pardon of our daily Infirmities, even to eternal Life in Glory.

Ther. Yes; upon Condition, that We fight the good Fight, and finish our Course of Duty. *Henceforth*, says the Apostle; after this is done, *there is laid up for me*, and for other victorious Soldiers, for other faithful Labourers, *a Crown of Righteousness*.

Asp. But is it vouchsafed, on account of their successful Warfare, or persevering Obedience? If so, *Israel may vaunt themselves, and say; Mine own Hand, not the REDEEMER's Interposition, hath saved me* *.

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might farther be urged, from a Variety of scriptural Testimonies—I shall only desire You to observe, what the Apostle Himself adds in this very Place. *There is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness*: but is this the Pay, proportionate or owing to his own Services? Is it what He claims and demands, on the Foot of Duty performed?—The very Title of the Reward implies the contrary. It is a *Crown of Righteousness*, because purchased by the meritorious and consummate Righteousness of *CHRIST*.—The Action of the Judge declares the contrary: *which the LORD, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day*. It is, You see, a *Gift*; an Act of Favour; the Issue of unmerited Bounty; what neither Saint, nor Martyr, nor Apostle enjoys, but only by way of gracious Donation*.

You have been complaining of your Guilt. Why will You increase and aggravate it? Why will You add Robbery to all your other Transgressions?

Ther. Robbery!

Asp. Yes, *Theron*. By all this Backwardness to receive *CHRIST* and his Benefits, You are really robbing *GOD*; robbing Him of the brightest Jewel in his Crown; the Honour of—his free Grace—his rich Mercy—his matchless, incomprehensible, heavenly Bounty.

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Ther.

* 2 *Tim.* iv. 8. The Word *αποδοσει*, as it stands in the present Connection, is, I think, very properly explained by a late pious Professor of Divinity at *Glasgow*: *Profitetur Fiduciam suam de gratuita Mercede, quam DEUS gratis promisit omnibus Fidelibus, & ut justus Judex, juste simul & ex Gratia rependet, non ex Merito ullo nostro, sed priora Dona sua gratuita posterioribus gratuito cumulando.* *DICSONI Expos. Analyt.*

328 DIALOGUE XV.

Ther. Ah! My *Assasio*! You don't know my State. You cannot conceive my Guilt*. I was, by Nature, a Child of Wrath. I have been, by Practice, a Slave of Sin. What is worse, I am still corrupt; have still a carnal Heart.—And has not such a Wretch forfeited all Title to the Divine Favour? Nay, does not such a Wretch deserve the Vengeance of eternal Fire?

Asp. That We all deserve this Misery, is certain beyond Dispute. I am glad, that We are sensible of our horrible Vileness. Now We are to believe, that the *LORD JESUS* has satisfied Divine Justice; has paid an immensely glorious Price, on purpose to obtain for such damnable Wretches, both the Manifestation, and all the Fruits, of the divine Good-Will. According to the Import of that charming Scripture, *When We were Enemies* (and what is there in an Enemy, to bespeak

* I believe, No One experienced in the spiritual Life will suspect, that *Theron* speaks out of Character.—Conscience, when once alarmed, is a stubborn and uncere- monious Thing. It pays no Deference to Wealth: it never stands in Awe of Grandeur: neither can it be soothed by the Refinements of Education, nor pacified by the Attainments of Learning. And We generally find, that a most unaccountable Propensity to *Self-wor- shipness*, strongly possesses the newly-awakened Sinner. He is perpetually raising Objections, founded on the Want of personal Merit; notwithstanding all our Re- monstrances, to quiet his Fears, and remove his Jeal- ousies. It is indeed a hard Task, for a Mind, natural- ly leavened with legal Pride, to come naked and mis- erable to *CHRIST*—to come, divested of every Recommendation, but that of extreme Wretchedness; and receive, from the Hand of unmerited Benignity, the free Riches of evangelical Grace.

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bespeak Favour, or deserve Benefits?) *We were reconciled to GOD by the Death of his SON**.

You have *great Guilt*.—But is this a Reason, why You should be prohibited the Blessings of the Covenant? Contemplate the State of that forlorn and wretched Outcast, described in the sixteenth of *Ezekiel*. An Infant in its Blood: this represents a Sinner, who has nothing to excite Love, but all that may provoke Abhorrence. Hear what the HOLY ONE of *Israel* says, concerning such an One. *When I saw Thee, washed, and purified, and made meet for my Acceptance? No; but when I saw Thee polluted in thy Blood†; loathsome with Defilement, and laden with Iniquity. Then, even then I said unto Thee, Live: I spread my Skirt over Thee; and Thou becamest mine.* Can You think of any Reason, why such a sordid Object should be cherished and caressed, but Mercy alone; mere Mercy, properly so called? Yet this is the Manner of GOD's Proceeding, not barely with one People, but with Sinners of every Denomination; not in one Period of Time only, but through all Ages and all Generations.

You are *still corrupt*.—What then? Does this hinder You from being relieved by the SAVI-OUR's Righteousness? Does it not rather prove You to be one of those, whom He came to seek and

* Rom. v. 10.

† The Words are peculiarly emphatical; not only doubled, but redoubled. To denote, at once, the *Strangeness* of the Fact, yet the *Certainty* of the Favour. *When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own Blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy Blood, Live: Yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy Blood, Live.* Ezek. xvi. 6.

and to save?—You are a Governor of the County-hospital, *Theron*. You have been industrious in promoting, and are active in supporting, that excellent Institution; where Medicine with her healing Stores, and Religion with her heavenly Hopes, act as joint Handmaids to Charity. What are the Circumstances, which render any Persons the proper Objects, for an Admission into your Infirmary?

Ther. Their Poverty, and their Distemper. Without *Poverty*, they would not need; and free from *Distemper*, they would not prize, the Benefit of our modern *Bethesda*.

Asp. Apply this to the Case under Consideration. The whole World is in a State of spiritual Disorder. *CHRIST* is styled, by the inspired Writer, *The LORD our Healer* *. The Gift of his Righteousness, the Balm of his Blood, and the Influences of his SPIRIT, are the sovereign Restorative. And sure it cannot be a fanciful Persuasion of our Health, but the real Misery of our Disease, which renders Us proper Objects of his recovering Grace.—*He came, not to call the Righteous, but Sinners* †. To give them *Repentance*, and Newness of Life;

* Exod. xv. 26.

† *I came, not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.* Matt. ix. 13. Many Persons, I am apt to suspect, mistake the Meaning of this sweet Passage; and turn the freely flowing Benefits of the Gospel, into the rigorous Requirements of the Law.

They reckon, our LORD's Calling to Repentance, is like a School-master calling the Youths to their Task, or like a Householder calling his Servants to their Work. Whereas, it is like *Joseph*, the Governor of *Egypt*, calling his Brethren, each to receive a Suit of Apparel, and all to partake of his hospitable Banquet.

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Life; which He effects, by giving Himself to them, as their whole Salvation.

Ther. But, if any foolish and refractory Patients have abused our Beneficence; it is a standing unalterable Rule of the House, never to admit them a second Time; however pressing their Exigencies, or however powerful their Recommender. I have, not once only, but through the whole Course of my Life, abused the marvelous Loving-kindness of the LORD.

Ass. And is not the LORD superior to all his Creatures, in Acts of *Pardon*, as well as of *Power*? Yes; as those Heavens are higher, than this prostrate Earth; so much more enlarged and extensive is the divine Clemency—than the widest Sphere of human Kindness, shall I say? Rather than the boldest Flights of human Imagination.

*Since Adam fell, no Mortal, uninspir'd,
Has ever yet conceiv'd, or ever shall,
How kind is GOD*.*

Your Statutes are inexorable, in case of one notorious Irregularity committed. *But the free Gift* of a REDEEMER's Righteousness is vouchsafed, notwithstanding *many Offences, unto Justification* †. It is the Glory of our Almighty RULER, and redounds to the Honour of his crucified SON, to pass over ‡ not a single Transgression only, but a Multitude

CHRIST, as a SAVIOUR, is the greatest of Benefactors. When, therefore, He calls to Repentance, his Intention is, not to demand, but to bestow; not to enjoin, but to impart. *HE is exalted*, says the Apostle, *to give Repentance.* Acts v. 31.

* Night Thoughts.

† Rom. v. 16.

‡ Prov.

xix. 11.

Multitude of Provocations; to be altogether as unequalled in Mercy, as HE is absolutely supreme in Majesty.

As it is the *grossest Pride*, to entertain high Notions of our own Accomplishments, or to expect eternal Life on the Score of our own Obedience; so it will be the *greatest Affront* to the Grandeur of *CHRIST*'s Merits, and the Freeness of his Grace, if we suppose our Crimes too heinous to be forgiven, or our Persons too vile to be accepted.

Ther. I have often thought; If I was as holy and righteous, as some Persons, whom I know; if I had such Dominion over my evil Affections, and brought forth such Fruits of Righteousness, as I have observed in some Christians; I could then confidently believe.

Asp. Then you would lay your own Holiness and Righteousness, as a Foundation for your Faith; not the infinitely tender Mercies, and the unalterably sure Promises of the LORD. In this Case, You would act like the Mason, who purposes to dig his Materials from a Cloud of Smoke, not from the Stones of the Quarry.

Besides, this Method would not only miscarry, but contradict the Design of *CHRIST*'s Coming. He came to *save Sinners*, and to *justify the Ungodly*. According to your Notion, He must come to save the Righteous, and to justify the Godly. He must be a Physician, not to the Diseased, but to the Healthy; and his Blood must cleanse, not the Defiled, but the Pure.

Whatever my Friend may have thought, I will not scruple to affirm; That, if He was indeed a righteous and godly Person, the *LORD JESUS*,

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as a SAVIOUR, would have nothing to do with him. But, being a sinful and ungodly Man, I will venture to add, what the People said to blind *Bartimeus*; *Be of good Comfort, He calleth Thee.* Calleth thee, that Thou mayest be justified, sanctified, saved. Therefore, *come boldly* to HIM, rely cheerfully on Him, that You may *obtain* this great *Mercy*, and share this rich Grace.

Theron paused.—These Considerations seemed to operate: This Anodyne to take effect.—Desirous to improve the favourable Juncture, and impart more strong Consolation, *Aspasio* added.

How often did the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* disregard the Warnings, and reject the Counsels of our Blessed LORD! How justly might HE have sworn in his Wrath; “They shall never hear the joyful Sound of my Gospel more. The Blessings, which they have so wantonly despised, and so wickedly abused, shall be irrevocably withdrawn.”—Instead of passing such a Sentence, this is the Charge, which, after his Resurrection, He gives to his Apostles: *Let Repentance and Remission of Sins be preached, in my Name, to all Nations, BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM**.—“At *Jerusalem*, LORD! Have not the Men of that ungrateful and barbarous City been deaf to thy tenderest Importunities? Did they not persecute Thee unto Condemnation and Death? Are not their Weapons still reeking, as it were, with thy Blood; and their Tongues still shooting out Arrows, even bitter Words? By which they would murder thy Character, as they have already crucified thy Person.”—Yet these Wretches (and could any be more inhuman? Could any

* Luke xxiv. 47.

any be more unworthy?) are not only not abhorred, but unto them is the Message of Grace, and the Word of Salvation sent. Nay, to shew the unparalleled Freeness of our REDEEMER's Grace, These are *first* upon the heavenly List. The glad Tidings of Pardon and Life, which are to be published through the World, *must begin* (amazing Mercy!) *MUST BEGIN* at *Jerusalem*.

Ther. Thus much I may venture to profess in my own Behalf: That I long for this Blessing—I pray for this Blessing—But I cannot see my Title, to this comprehensive and inestimable Blessing, *clear*.

Asp. I behold it perfectly clear. Not because You long for it, and pray for it. But because *CHRIST* and his Righteousness are *granted* * unto You, in the sure irrevocable Record of the Gospel.

Ther.

* By this Grant, We have a Title to *CHRIST*; yes, says Mr. *Boston*, by Virtue of this Grant, "*CHRIST* is ours, even before We believe. Not that We have a *saving Interest* in Him, or are in a State of Grace: but "that We have a *common Interest* in Him, and the common Salvation; which fallen Angels have not. So "that it is lawful and warrantable for Us, not for them, "to take Possession of *CHRIST* and his Salvation."—See Mr. *Boston*'s Notes upon a Book, entitled *The Marrow of modern Divinity*.

A Book, designed to guard equally against *antinomian* Licentiousness, and *legal* Bondage. The Thoughts are just and striking; the Arguments solid and convincing. The Diction is familiar, yet perspicuous; and the Doctrine exceedingly comfortable, because truly evangelical. —The *Notes* are, I think, a Master-piece of candid and judicious Criticism. In which the nice Discernment of the Logician, sifts, distinguishes, and adjusts the rich Furniture of the Divine.—Perhaps, I may venture to say, that this little Treatise pours as much Light upon the Gospel

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Ther. Can you mention a Passage, in which these precious Blessings are granted?

Asp. Easily and readily. *If any Man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.*—Some Days ago, a worthy Clergyman, who lately came to settle in the Neighbourhood, did Himself the Honour of making one at your Table. After Dinner, You shewed Him your Library; We took a Walk in your Garden; and made the agreeable Tour of the Fishponds. Then—with that amiable Frankness of Mien and Accent, which is so peculiar to my Friend, and endears all his Favours—You told Him; “That He was as welcome to any Book in your Study, “as if the whole Collection was his own. That “if, on a Visit from some Acquaintance of superior Rank, He should wish to be accommodated “with a more delicate Entertainment than usual; “the Productions of your Waters, and of your “Hot-beds, were intirely at his Service. And that “his Acceptance of your Offers, without the least “Shyness or Reserve, would be the most pleasing “Compliment, He could pay You on the Occasion.”

Ther. Why do You leave the sacred Text? Why desist from opening the Treasures of Scripture; only to gild a Potsherd, and make Earth and Ashes vain?

Asp. Not to make *Theron* vain, but to make Him ashamed of his Distrust. In the Manner of doing this, I follow the Example of my unerring MASTER. He deduces his Argument for Faith in the

Gospel and Grace of *CHRIST*; and, together with the Notes, affords as many important Distinctions in Divinity, as any Book of its Size whatever.

the everlasting FATHER, from the Sensations which earthly Parents feel towards their Children. He appeals even to the Experience of *bad* Men, and to the Yearnings of *their own* Bowels, for a Vindication and Display of the divine Compassion. *If Ye then, being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your heavenly FATHER give good Things, to Them that ask Him*?* But We return to the Application of our Text.

Thus said my Friend. And what says the PROPRIETOR of all Good?—*If any Man*, however unworthy his Person, or obnoxious his Character, *thirst*.—Thirst for something, to make Him truly happy. Saying, with them of old Time, “Who will shew Us any Good?”—*Let Him come unto ME*, the Fountain of living Waters; and not only taste, or sip, but *drink* his Fill.—Though He has hitherto been hewing to himself *broken* Cisterns, and labouring for that, which satisfieth not. Nay; though He has frequented the *polluted* Stream, and not only beguiled Himself with Vanity, but defiled Himself with Iniquity. Yet let Him turn to Me, and He shall neither meet with a Repulse, nor find his Wishes mocked. He shall obtain substantial Satisfaction; even the Forgiveness of his Sins, the true Righteousness, and everlasting Life †.—Since then the Invitation is so absolutely free, what have You to do, but, without Scruple or Doubtfulness, to drink? To receive the Promise as your Portion, and to look upon the Blessings as your own?

That

* Matt. vii. 11.

† Nothing less than these Blessings, can be meant by the *Drink* which CHRIST gives: as nothing less than these, can satiate the weary Soul.

That Clergyman has not the least Suspicion of being disappointed, in case He should send for a Brace of Carp from your Canal, or a fine Melon from your Garden.—Why is He so confident? Because He has done You any signal Service? No; but because You have passed your Word, and made the generous Offer.—And why should You harbour the least Doubt concerning the Divine Veracity? Why should You call in question your Right to these heavenly Treasures? Since it is founded on a Grant, altogether as *free*, altogether as *clear*, as your own indulgent Concession; and infinitely more *firm*, than any human Engagement. Founded on the Fidelity of that sublime BEING, who “re-
members his Covenant and Promise to a thousand
“Generations.”

Ther. It is impossible to confute, yet difficult to believe, what You urge.

Ass. What I urge, is not the Voice of a few dubious Passages, nicely culled from the Book of GOD, or forcibly wrested by the Interpretation of Man. The whole Tenour of Inspiration runs, with the greatest Perspicuity, and the greatest Uniformity, in this delightful Strain.—Let me, out of a Multitude, produce another Express from the Court of Heaven. *Ho! every One that thirsteth, come Ye to the Waters, even He that hath no Money. Come Ye, buy and eat: yea; come, buy Wine and Milk, without Money and without Price*.*—Wine and Milk, signify the Justification of our Persons; our Sanctification thereby; and the Hope of eternal Glory. These are nourishing and refreshing to the Soul, as Milk the richest of Foods, and as Wine the best of

VOL. III.

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Cordials,

* Isai. lv. 1.

338 D I A L O G U E XV.

Cordials, are to the Body.—These, You see, are to be received and enjoyed, *without Money, and without Price.* Without any Merit of our own; without any Plea deduced from Ourselves; by poor, undone, perishing Bankrupts.—They are thus free for *every One.* No Exception is made. No exclusive Clause added. It is not said, Any One that is *worthy*; but Every One, that *thirsteth*.—And this is mentioned, not as a Qualification entitling; but as connecting the Invitation with those Circumstances*, which must make it more eminently gracious, and more

* *Those Circumstances*—that is, the Unhappiness and Misery occasioned by Sin; which, and not any gracious Habits, are set forth under the Notion of *thirsting*. This Thirst all Men are labouring to quench; some one Way, some another. The Gospel points out the *only* Way of doing it effectually, and invites Us to make Use of the happy Expedient.

Every One that thirsteth; “thirsteth for the Grace of “GOD, and for the Blessings of the Gospel,” says Mr. Poole. Whose *Annotations*, though on critical Points accurate; on historical Subjects perspicuous; are not always, on doctrinal Heads, so truly evangelical, as might be wished.—“This Thirst, He adds, implieth a “vehement, and active Desire of Grace.” Does not such an Exposition place the greatest Part of Mankind, yea even of the visible Church, quite beyond the Compass of this gracious Invitation?—But to our unspeakable Comfort, the following Verse decides the Question, against the celebrated Commentator, and in Favour of the miserable Sinner. The *thirsty* are those, who *spend their Money for that which is not Bread, and their Labour for that which satisfieth not.* Which is the Case with unreasonable, foolish, wicked Men. These therefore are invited. Whereas, they who thirst for Grace; whose Thirst is vehement and active; they are not spending their Money at this unprofitable Rate. On the contrary; they are labouring for that, which is substantial Bread, and, of all Things in the World, most satisfying.

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more particularly interesting.—To leave no Room for any misgiving Apprehensions, the kind Invitation is repeated; *buy and eat; buy Wine and Milk.* The invaluable yet free Tender, is confirmed again and again; *He that hath no Money; without Money; without Price.* And both are pressed upon Us with a very remarkable Ardour, with the most affectionate Vehemence; *Come Ye; come Ye; yea, come.*

Had our heavenly BENEFACTOR permitted Us to draw up this Instrument of Conveyance, and word it according to our own Wish; what Language could We have contrived, to render either the Grant more free, or our Claim more secure?

Ther. These are chearing Truths; and as cogent, as chearing. They amount to little less than a Demonstration. Methinks, I am ready to profess, in the Language of *Agrippa*; *Almost Thou persuadest me, to trust and not be afraid.*

Asp. If I have *almost* persuaded, my GOD will *altogether* persuade. This is the Work of his blessed SPIRIT. Which he accomplishes, by such gracious Words, and such encouraging Words, as those We have been quoting.—And can You distrust the Sincerity of the divine Overtures? If the Overtures are real, your Title is unquestionable.—Nay; there is more than an Overture. You have an *actual* Gift, from the Almighty MAJESTY. *To Us*, says the Prophet, *a Child is born**. *To Us*—He repeats the precious Truth; to declare his exuberant Joy †, and denote the absolute Certainty

* *Isai. ix. 6.*

† *Virgil* has copied the Prophet's *fine Manner*. He represents Joy, uttering her Sentiments, in the same spirited

ty* of the Thing—a Son is given. Even GOD's own SON, the ever-blessed JESUS, to be our PROPITIATION, our SURETY, our complete REDEEMER.

Just cast a Look upon yonder neat Lodge. Tho' placed in the Center of a spacious Field, it seems to be contiguous with the Extremity of the Vista, which it terminates. The Eye, traveling over such a Length of Ground, has almost lost the Windows, and the decent Ornaments of the Front. But I shall not soon lose the Idea of that amiable Munificence; which, as I was rambling one pleasant Morning, and accidentally called at the House, I learned from its present Owner.—He was, I find, one of your Servants. Had spent several Years in your Family. When He settled in the World, You bestowed upon him that commodious Box, and a pretty adjacent Farm; to possess, without Molestation or Controul, during his Life.—Does He not reckon the little Estate, by virtue of your Donation, to be his own? As much his own, for the Time prescribed, as if He had paid an Equivalent in Money?—Since the LORD has given Us his SON, and all his unutterable Merits; why should We not, with an Assurance of Faith, receive the Gift, and look upon it as our own? Why should we not confide in a Gift from JEHOVAH; and reckon

spirited Strain, with the same reiterated Earnestness:

—————*Humilemque videmus*
Italiam, Italiam primus exclamat Achates.
Italiam læto Socii clamore salutant.

* See Gen. xli. 32.

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reckon it firmer, than the firmest Deed? Far more inviolable, than any royal Patent?

Ther. My Servant never affronted my Authority. If He had vilified my Character, or insulted my Person, should I then have been inclined to make the same advantageous Settlement?

Asp. Herein appears the infinite Superiority of the divine Bounty. GOD is rich in Mercy, not only to the Obedient and Grateful, but to the Unthankful and Unworthy. *To the LORD our GOD,* says the Prophet, *belong Mercies and Forgivenesses;* in Measure superabundant, and in Continuance unwearied. And this, *notwithstanding We have offended Him,* by our manifold Failures in Duty. Nay, *have rebelled * against Him,* by the most flagrant Violations of his Law.

In

* *Dan. ix. 9.* The Original is מרדנו. Than which no Expression, in the *Hebrew* Language, bears a more obnoxious Signification. It denotes the most *audacious* and the most *flagitious* Impiety. It denotes that *Rebellion*, which is as the Sin of Witchcraft; and that *Stubbornness*, which is as the Iniquity of Idolatry. Yet, all virulent and execrable as it is, it does not suppress the Yearnings of divine Pity, nor supersede the Exercise of divine Forgiveness.—With a Word derived from the same Root, *Saul*, when exasperated almost to Madness, upbraids *Jonathan*. And we know Persons so extremely incensed, never speak in the softest Terms; never touch the Subject with a Feather, but make their Tongue like a sharp Sword.

May I venture to add? That our Translators seem to mistake the proper Application of the afore-mentioned Passage. They represent *Saul's* Invective, flying as wide of the Mark, as it is over-charged with Malice.—*Son of the perverse rebellious Woman!* This might be asserted, without the least Impeachment of *Jonathan's* personal Loyalty.—Besides, is it not excessively indecent, as well

Grace, of none Effect with regard to Ourselves, by saying each in his Heart; "What signifies all " this to me? Unless I can find some superior " Excellency in myself—something, whereby the " DEITY should distinguish me, as his Favourite " —for which He should respect me, as more deserving than others."

Ther. Thanks, *Aspasio*, many Thanks for your Admonition. It is both kind and salutary. Methinks, it begins to cheer my Spirit, and dissipate my uneasy Apprehensions. O! may these Clouds on my Mind, follow those in the Firmament! For a considerable Time, they hung abroad their extensive Sables, to damp the Ardour, and abate the Glare of Day. The Sun has been colouring their fleecy Skirts, and spreading over the floating Screen a Variety of interchangeable Hues. Now He begins to edge them with Gold, and shine them into Silver. A sure Indication, that (like the *glittering*, but *transitory* Toys, which they represent) they will soon be swept from the Horizon, and seen no more. —The bright Orb, while we are speaking, bursts the Veil; and, from a voluminous Pomp of parting Clouds, pours a Flood of Splendor over all the Face of Nature.—We shall quickly perceive this open Situation, too hot to consist with Pleasure: and must be obliged to seek for Shelter, in the shady Apartments of the House.

Asp. We must. And will you admit me, *Theron*, into those shady Apartments?

Ther. Admit You, *Aspasio*!—I am surprised at your Question. I thought You had known me better: and am sorry, it should be needful to assure

DIALOGUE XV. 345

You, that my House is as much yours, as it is mine. The more freely You command it, the more highly you will gratify the Owner.

Asp. May I believe my *Theron*? Does-He speak from his Heart? Or must I conclude, that He plausibly professes, what He has no Intention to perform?—Would you be pleased, If I should obstinately persist in these dishonourable Suspicions, notwithstanding all your friendly Protestations?

Ther. My dear *Aspasio*, I see your Design. I see, and am ashamed. Ashamed to think, that I should fancy myself more punctual in my Professions, than GOD is true to his Word.—*LORD*, I believe. Help Thou mine Unbelief!





DIALOGUE XVI.



OUR Friends had agreed upon a Visit to *Philenor*. They rode through a fine, open, fruitful Country. Which was covered with Crops of ripened Corn; and occupied by several Parties of Rustics, gathering in the copious *Harvest*.

The *Rye*, white and hoary as it were with Age, waved its bearded Billows, and gave a dry husky Rustle before the Breeze.—The *Wheat*, laden with Plenty, and beautifully brown, hung the heavy Head; and invited, by its bending Posture, the Reaper's Hand. Platts of *Barley*, and Acres of *Oats*, stood whitening in the Sun. Upright, and perfectly even, as though the Gardener's Shears had clipped them at the Top, they gratified the Spectator's Eye, and gladdened the Farmer's Heart.—*Beans* partly clad in native Green, partly transformed and tawny with the parching Ray, were preparing the last Employ for the crooked Weapon.—

Some

Some of the Grain lay flat, in regular Rows, on the new-made Stubble. Some was erected, in graceful Shocks, along the bristly Ridges. Some, conveyed homewards on the loaded Waggon, nodded over the groaning Axle.

The Villages seemed to be empty, and all their Inhabitants poured into the Plains. Here were Persons of each Sex, and of every Age.—The lusty *Youths*, stooping to their Work, plied the Sickle; or swept, with their Scythes, the falling Ranks.—The sprightly *Females* followed, binding the Handfuls into Sheaves, or piling the Swarths into hasty Cocks. Dispersed up and down were the *Children* of the Needy, gleaning the scattered Ears, and picking their scanty Harvest.—Nor were the *old* People absent; but crawling into the Sun, or sitting on a shady Eminence, they beheld the Toils—the pleasing Toils, which they once sustained.

This is the most joyful Period of the Countryman's Life; the long expected Crown of all his Labours. For this, He broke the stubborn Glebe, and manured the impoverished Soil. For this, He bore the sultry Beams of Summer, and shrunk not from the pinching Blasts of Winter. For this, He toiled away the Year, in a Round of ceaseless but willing Activity. Knowing, that *the Husbandman must labour, before he partakes of the Fruits* *.—And will not the blessed Hope of everlasting Life; will not the

* 2 Tim. ii. 6. *Beza* thinks, that in settling the Construction of this Verse, the Adverb *πρῶτον* should be connected with the Participle *κοπιῶντα*. If so, the Translation exhibited above, may bid fair for Acceptance; and,

348 DIALOGUE XVI.

the bright Expectation of consummate Bliss, animate Us with an equally chearful Resolution, both to resist the Temptations, and discharge the Duties of our present State?

Short seem'd the Way, and quick pass'd the Time, as they travel'd through such Scenes of rural Abundance, and rural Delight.—Before they were aware, the Horses stopp'd at *Philenor's* Seat. Where they found, to their no small Disappointment, that the Master was gone abroad. They alighted however, and took a Walk in the *Gardens*.

The *Gardens*, at proper Intervals, and in well-chosen Situations, were interspers'd with various Pieces of Statuary. At the Turn of a Corner, You are—not shock'd with a naked *Gladiator*, or a beastly *Priapus*—but unexpectedly entertained with the Image of *Tully*. He is just risen from his Seat, and upon the Point of addressing Himself to some important Oration. A reverential Awe appears in his Countenance; such as silently acknowledges, that He is going to plead before the Rulers of the World. His thoughtful Aspect, and gracefully expanded Arm, speak to the Eye, before the Tongue has utter'd a Syllable. We look round for the venerable Audience, and are agreeably surpris'd, to find nothing but Hedges and Trees.

You

and, one of the most celebrated Historians, may have the Honour of commenting on the greatest of the Apostles; *Næ illi falsi sunt, qui diversissimas Res expectant, Ignorantiam, Voluptatem, & Præmia Virtutis*. SALUST. i. e. They are, beyond all Dispute, most egregiously mistaken, who hope to unite those incompatible Things, the Pleasures of Indolence, and the Rewards of Industry.

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You enter an Alley, lined on either Side with a verdant Fan; and having no Variety of Objects to diversify the intermediate Space, your View is conducted to a magnificent Building at the End. As you walk along, contemplating the masterly Performance in Architecture, a sudden Opening diverts your Attention; and presents you with some striking Imitation of virtuous or heroic Life.—Not the *Macedonian* Madman; nor *Sweden's* royal Knight-errant; nor *Cæsar*, infamously renowned for his slaughtered Millions; but the truly gallant *Czar*. A drawn Sword in his Hand, and a commanding majestic Sternness on his Brow. The Weapon is held in the most menacing Posture; and many a Spectator has been observed to start back, with Apprehensions of Fear. It is that gloriously severe Attitude, in which the grateful Citizens of *Narva* beheld Him, and in which all Posterity will admire Him; when He turned upon his own victorious, but ungovernable Troops, and threatened to drench the Dagger in their Hearts, if they did not immediately desist from Rapine* and Slaughter; immediately allow Quarter to their vanquished Foes.

If here the Marble threatens, and the Hero frowns, in yonder Alcove the Pencil has displayed a softer Scene. There, in a lonely Recess, and under

* “As soon as the Soldiers were Masters of the Town, (*Narva*) they fell to Plunder, and gave themselves up to the most enormous Barbarities. The *Czar* ran from Place to Place, to put a stop to the Disorder and Massacre. He was even obliged to kill with his own Hand several *Muscovites*, who did not hearken to his Orders.”

VOLTAIRE's *Hist. Charl.* XII.

der the melancholy Shades of Cypress, the brave *Abradates* claims our Pity. Fallen is the generous Warrior, and prostrate on the Ground. See his manly Features, serene and intrepid still, though a dying Paleness has clouded all. Closed are those sprightly Eyes, which used to glow with Courage and martial Ardour. Closed, alas! never to be opened more; no, not to behold his amiable *Panthea*.—The amiable *Panthea*, kneeling on the Earth, and bending over the Corpse, has raised the lifeless Head. Her own droops like a Lily furcharged with Rain; yet she has placed the lovely Burthen on her Arm, and bathed it with her Tears. See! with what Tenderness she supports it, and with what Fondness cherishes it. While *Cyrus*, to express a distinguished Regard for the deceased Prince, clasps his cold Hand. Distressing Mistake! He starts, He is amazed, to behold that able and trusty Arm, suddenly falling from the Shoulder-Blade. The Tear swells into his Eyes, and speaks the Sorrow of his royal Heart. But what can speak the Anguish, which moans in thy Countenance, and rends thy Heart, thou afflicted *Panthea*!—O! that thou hadst known the Truths, and tasted the Comforts of *Christianity*! Then might thy Resignation to Providence have been as exemplary, as thy Fidelity to thy Lord. For want of this most consolatory Knowledge, what frantic and fatal Purposes are forming in thy Breast! We are shocked at the Apprehension of so horrid a Deed. We turn away from the Sight, and would lose the very Thought, in some more pleasing Spectacle.

Behold a Spectacle, more pleasing, and very different. Under a circular Dome, supported by Pil-

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lars of the *Doric* Order, and in a Spot where several Walks center, stands—not the *Venus a Medicis*; corrupting, while it captivates, the World—but a *Spartan* Mother. Her Habit decent and graceful; somewhat like the *Juno Matrona* of the *Romans*, as She is finely depicted in Mr. *Spence's Polymetis*. Her Air stately and resolved; expressive of Dignity, yet mingled with Softness. She holds a Shield: is in the Act of delivering it to her Son; a Youth, setting out for the Army, and going to hazard his Life, in the Defence of his Country. She is supposed to add that spirited and magnanimous Exhortation, which is engraven on the Protuberance of the Buckler—*ἦταν, ἡ ἐπιταῖς*—*Bring it back, my Son, as thy Trophy; or, be brought back upon it, as thy Bier.*

I am particularly pleased, said *Theron*, with the Contrivance of this last Ornament. It is regulated by one of the most refined Rules of Art; not to lavish away all the Beauty at a single View, but to make a skilful Reserve for some future Occasion.—The Dome and the Columns afford Pleasure, when beheld at a considerable Distance. The fine animated Figure in the midst displays its Graces, on a nearer Approach. By which means, the Attention is kept awake, and the Entertainment continues new.

But what I principally admire, is the *Spirit* or *Style* of the Decorations in general. They put me in mind of a very just Remark, which Mr. *Pope* has somewhere made. It is, if I remember right, to this Effect.—“A Man not only shews his Taste, but his Virtue, in the Choice of his Ornaments. A proper Piece of History, represented in Painting on a rich Man's Walls, (or exhibited in Imagery
“amidst

"amidst his Gardens) is very often a better Lesson, than any He could teach by his Conversation. In this Sense, the Stones may be said to speak, "when Men cannot, or will not."—All but the comparative or satyrical Part of the Observation, I would apply to the Prospect before Us, and its worthy Owner.

Asp. *Philenor's* Gardens are, I think, more chaste and delicate in their Ornaments, than a certain collegiate Church. In the latter Place, We might reasonably expect the strictest Adherence to Purity, if We should not meet with the Symbols of Piety, and Incitements to Religion.—What then would be the Reflections of a judicious Observer, if, in such a solemn and venerable Edifice, He should see a huge brawny Fellow stuck up against the Wall; with his Posteriors half bare; his whole Body more than half naked; and in an Attitude none of the most decent*.—Excuse me, *Theron*. I confess my-

self

* Referring to the Monument, lately erected for MAJOR GENERAL FLEMING, in *Westminster-Abbey*. Where, under the General's Bust, are placed *Hercules* and *Pallas*; *Hercules*, with his Club and Lion's Skin, in the Manner related above. *Pallas*, with a Mirror and a Serpent at her Side.—The Reader may see a Picture and an Explanation of this Monument, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for August 1754.

As this Church has been the Burial-place of the most illustrious Personages, for many Centuries; as it is the Place, where all our Kings receive their Crowns, and many of them deposit their Ashes; as it is singularly eminent for its Antiquities and Monuments; there is a large Resort both of Natives and Foreigners, to view its grand and awful Curiosities. Whatever, therefore, is erected in a Place so circumstanced and so distinguished, should not only display an Air of Elegance in the Execution, but include a Beauty of Holiness in the Design. Be-

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self-ashamed, even to recite the Description. How then can the Spectacle itself become the House of Divine Worship?

Ther. But perhaps this same brawny Fellow may represent a *Heathen* Demigod; one of the *Idols* worshiped by Antiquity; the tutelary Deity of Valour.

Asp. And will this justify the Practice? Does not this add Profaneness to Immodesty? Are We *Christians* to thank *Hercules* for the Valour of our Warriors, and make our Acknowledgments to *Pallas* for the Conduct of our Generals? Shall We *Christians* behold with Admiration, or recognize as our Benefactors, what the Apostle has stigmatized under the Character of *Devils* *?

If H E, who overthrew the Tables of the Money-changers, had taken a Walk in these famous Cloysters, I am apt to suspect, He would have paid no very agreeable Compliment to this fine Piece of Statuary. *Take these Things hence*, would probably have been his Command; and, *make not the Precincts of your Temple a Chamber of Pagan Imagery*, his Rebuke †.—Neither is it at all unlikely, that the Image itself, notwithstanding its inimitable

VOL. III.

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cause, nothing can lay claim to the *το καλον*, which is not possessed of the *το ωραιον*. Nor can any Performances, thus situated, be pronounced truly graceful, but such only as correspond with the Character, and subserve the Design of the sacred Edifice.

It was thought, by a very able Critic and a very candid Writer, that mere *Impropriety* of Taste, in ornamenting one of the Monuments, called for his Censure. Surely then a Violation of *Decency*, and an Approach to *Paganism*, call more loudly for public Animadversion, and proper Reformation. See *Spect.* Vol. I. N^o 26.

* 1 Cor. x. 20.

† John ii. 16.

Workmanship, might have shared the Fate of its Kinsman *Dagon*.

————— *When the captive Ark*

*Maim'd his brute Image, Head and Hands lopp'd off
In his own Temple, on the Groundsell Edge
When He fell flat, and sham'd his Worshipers*.*

Ther. But how should the Artist express the great Achievements and the shining Qualities of his Hero, if You will not allow Him to make use of these significant Emblems?

Asp. I question, whether they are so very significant. The Mirror seems to characterize a Fop, rather than a Soldier. It leads Us to think of a soft *Narcissus*, admiring Himself; rather than a sagacious General, planning the Operations of the Campaign.—Besides; is sacred Literature so destitute of proper Emblems, that We must borrow the Decorations of our Churches, and the Trophies of our Conquerors, from the Dreams of Superstition or the Delusions of Idolatry? How just and expressive are those emblematical Representations, exhibited in *Ezekiel's* Vision! Where Activity and Speed are signified, by *Hands* in Conjunction with *Wings*; and the deep, the complicated, yet ever harmonious Schemes of Providence, by a *Wheel in the Middle of a Wheel* †.—With what Propriety and Force are the noblest Endowments pictured, in the Revelations of *St. John*, and their grand Machinery! Superior Wisdom and Benevolence of Heart, are described by the Face of a *Man*; Strength of Mind and Intrepidity of Spirit, by the Visage of a *Lion*; Calmness of Temper and indefatigable Application, by

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* MILTON, B. I. 458.

† Ezek. i. 8, 16.

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the Features of *an Ox*; a penetrating Discernment, and an expeditious Habit of acting, by the Form of *a flying Eagle* *.

These Hieroglyphics are graceful, are pertinent, and such as every Spectator will understand. Whereas, the Devices of our new monumental Encomium are, to the Unlearned, hardly intelligible; to the Serious, little better than profane; and to every Beholder, indelicate if not immodest.—*Philenor*, I imagine, would blush to admit them into his Walks or Avenues. And I am sorry to find them received into the most antient †, most renowned, and most frequented Church in the Kingdom.

Talking in this Manner, they stroll into a spacious Lawn, terminated by a very remarkable Grove; formed on that uncommon Plan, proposed by Mr. *Addison*, in one of his *Spectators*.—It consists wholly of *Evergreens*. *Firs*, clad in vegetable Silver, point their resinous Leaves, and shoot aloft their towering Cones. *Laurels* arrayed in glossy Green, spread their ample Foliage, and throw abroad their rambling Boughs.—*Bay-trees* are expanded into a Fan, which no Weather can tarnish; or rounded into a Column, which knows not how to moulder. While the *Laurustinus* runs out into a beautiful Irregularity of Shape; and compacts her reddening Gems,

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* Rev. iv. 7.

† Some Antiquarians trace back the Origin of this Church, even to the Reign of *Lucius*. Which is more than the Space of 1500 Years. Others suppose, that *Sebert*, King of the *East-Saxons*, about the Year of our LORD 605, built the first religious Structure on this Spot. All agree, that it was re-edified and enlarged by *Edward the Confessor*; and that the present stately and magnificent Fabric, was founded by *Henry III*.

in order to unfold her whitening Bloom.—In one Place lies a Dale, gently sinking, and coated with the *Chamomile's* natural Frieze; which never changes its Colour, never loses its Gloss. Near it, and scooped, You would imagine, from the same Hollow, rises a Mount, softly swelling, and shagged with *Eurze*; gay in their own perennial Green, and generally decked with golden Blossoms.—Here, You are led through a serpentine Walk, and Hedges of *Box*; and find, perhaps, a solitary Pyramid or a capacious Urn, each composed of unfading *Yew*. There You look through a strait Alley, fenced on either Side, and arched over Head, with mantling *Philirea*; at the Extremity, appears an Obelisk sheathed in *Ivy*, and ornamented with its fable Clusters, as with Wreaths of living Sculpture.—Scattered up and down, are several Sorts of *Holly*; some striped with White; some spotted with Yellow; some preparing to brighten and beautify the Scene, with Berries of glowing Scarlet.

The greatest Part of the Plantation is, not ranged in order, but thrown into little Groups, or rude Clumps. Which form an agreeable Variety, resulting from Art, yet resembling Confusion.—The whole ascends, Tree above Tree, in a regular Slope; from the diminutive *Mezereon*, to the lofty *Cypress*, or the loftier *Pine*. By this Disposition, the Stems and Trunks being concealed, nothing is displayed to your Sight, but the leafy Tops. The several Shadings of whose Attire, greatly diversified and judiciously intermixed, compose a magnificent Sheet of Verdure. To this the free and enlarged Opening of the Lawn, affords a full View, and gives the most advantageous Aspect. Than which,

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especially in the Winter-Season, nothing can be more grand, more enlivened, or more pleasing.

Asp. There must be something wonderfully agreeable in a Plantation, which appears lively and fruitful, when all its Neighbours of the wood-land Race, are barren, bleak, or dead. But, how much more chearing and delightful must it be; when *decrepit* Age, or bodily Infirmities, have laid waste the Gratifications of our youthful Prime; to find a solid *undecaying* Pleasure, in the Favour of GOD, and the Hope of Glory!—Now indeed the feathered Tribes resort to the more flowing Umbrage of the Poplar and the Ash. But amidst *December's* Cold, You shall observe them forsaking the *leafless* Woods, and flocking to this friendly Receptacle; hopping across the sunny Walks, or sheltering themselves, in the wet and stormy Day, under these *trusty* Boughs. So, the many thoughtless Creatures, who turn their Back upon Religion, amidst the soft and soothing Caresses of Prosperity; will want, extremely want, its *sovereign Supports*, under the sharp and distressing Assaults of Adversity, Sickness, and Death.

This Collection, it is true, may not equal the Groves of annual Verdure, in Floridity of Dress; but it far exceeds them, in the Duration of its Ornaments. Ere long, yonder shewy Branches will be stript of their Holiday Clothes: whereas, these will retain their rural Honours. *These* will be adorned with Flowers, and enriched with Berries; when *those* are nothing but Rags, Nakedness, and Deformity.—Rags, Nakedness, and Deformity! Such will be every Shelter, and every Refuge for our poor, imperfect, sinful Souls; excepting only the

Righteousness of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. Every Thing else, will *fade as a Leaf* *; which the Summer nurses, but the Winter is sure to destroy. This, my *Theron*, and this alone is an *Evergreen*: always free for our Acceptance, and always effectual to save.

Ther. An Evergreen it is; or rather, the choicest Fruit in the Garden of Paradise. But it seems to be quite beyond my Reach. *JESUS CHRIST* has finished every Requisite, without any Exception, which may procure Acceptance for the guilty Person, and afford Relief to the guilty Conscience—

Asp. Of the most profane Wretch, that lives. —Add this to your Belief, or else You curtail the Grace of *GOD*, and diminish the Merit of *CHRIST*.

Ther. This is what I was going to add; I believe also, that if I was interested in this divine *SAVIOUR*, sinful as I am, my Conscience would have Peace, and my Soul should live. But alas!—

Asp. Your Manner of speaking brings to my Mind, what I have somewhere read, concerning an Infant born with a Snake about its Neck. A strange Kind of Necklace, You will say, for a human Creature to come into the World with. Perhaps, You will suspect, or even more than suspect; That Fancy must be the Mother, and the Midwife also, of this very singular Birth. Yet have a Care, You don't realize the Story. You have made an excellent Acknowledgment; which is like a fair and promising Infant. These *puts* and *ifs*, these Doubts and Surmises, are a poisonous Snake. Tear away

* *Isai. lxiv. 6.*

the mischievous Incumbrance. Never suffer it to twist itself round the Neck of your good Confession. You believe, that *CHRIST* has thoroughly finished the great Work. Believe also, that there is no clogging or intervening Condition; no recommendatory Duty to be performed, in order to your full Participation of *CHRIST*; of his Peace-speaking Blood, and his Life-giving Righteousness. *Only believe*, and they are actually your own.

Ther. This is one of those Sayings, which have often puzzled my Mind. I cannot conceive, how such grand Blessings, and such a complete Felicity, should be made ours, only by Believing.

Apf. This, or something very much like it, puzzled and offended *Naaman the Syrian*. “Wash! Only wash! In *Jordan*! The common Water of the commonest River! Can this be attended with such extraordinary Consequences? Can this cure a Man of his inveterate Leprosy?”—Thus We are apt to argue: Only believe the Report of the Gospel! Only believe, that *GOD* freely gives Us his incarnate SON, and all spiritual Blessings with Him! Is it possible, that this simple Expedient, should be productive of such noble Effects?—Surely, if We would obtain Remission of Sins, Deliverance from Death, Righteousness and everlasting Life, We must *do some great Thing*.

Faith, in this Respect, is like its divine Object. It “has no Form nor Comeliness;” nothing pompous or shewy. It seems a little Thing. It really is a little Thing. But it pleases the most high *GOD*, to compass his magnificent Ends, by little and ordinary Means. *CHRIST dwelleth in our Hearts*, saith the Apostle. How? By pious Works

and laborious Pre-requisites? No; but merely by *Faith*.—*Ye received the SPIRIT*. How? By the Works of the Law? By your own Labour and Travail? No; only by *the Hearing of Faith*.

Besides; can You conceive any other rational Way, whereby We may apprehend an unseen *CHRIST*, and take Possession of a promised Salvation, but only by assuring Ourselves, that they are given to Us; and, in Consequence of this Gift, regarding them as our own Property?

Ther. At other Times (so strange is my Inconsistency!) I entertain such an Idea of the Greatness of Faith, that I say within myself, “I cannot believe.” My Mind is, as You formerly hinted, like the withered Arm.

Asp. This Difficulty on your Mind, because of the Greatness of Faith, is wholly founded on Mistake. The Gospel informs You, that whatever is necessary for your Salvation, is already done and obtained by *CHRIST*. That whatever is done and obtained by *CHRIST*, is freely given You by the *GOD* of all Grace. Consequently, that You are called only to receive a Gift, not to perform a Work.

You, on the contrary, suppose; That Something more is to be done, Something to be acquired or executed by Yourself; before You may venture to call the Riches of *CHRIST* your own. This creates the insuperable Difficulty. This renders your Mind like the withered Arm.—Whereas, when these Truths of the Gospel are made manifest to your Conscience; when You are enabled to see, that what *CHRIST* has wrought, is absolutely sufficient to procure all spiritual Blessings; that

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what GOD has said, is equally sufficient to warrant an Application of all to Yourself; then HE, who bids You stretch out, strengthens the withered Hand.

And will He not strengthen? Can You doubt the Sincerity of his Call, or his Willingness to save the Weak and the Wicked? Then go to Mount Calvary. *There listen to the Sounding of his Bowels, and see the Flowing of his Mercies* *. Cannot You read a Language in each streaming Wound, and hear a Voice in every dying Pang?—Do they not all speak his infinite Love, even to wretched helpless Sinners? Do they not all address You with that tender Remonstrance, *O Thou of little Faith, wherefore dost thou doubt* †?

Ther. Still the Difficulty recurs. Whether it be from any wrong Apprehension, of some great Thing to be done; or from an Averseness of submitting to the Way of Salvation by Grace; or an unaccountable Distrust of the Certainty of what GOD has promised; whatever be the Cause, I am sure, I feel my Impotence. Experience teaches me, what the Apostle affirms; *No Man can say, with all his Heart, that JESUS is the LORD, who hath bought me with his Blood, but by the HOLY GHOST.*

Asp. You feel your Impotence—to what? To receive a free Gift, and call it your own? To trust wholly, and without Reserve, on the Word which GOD has spoken, and on the Work which CHRIST has wrought? Consider the Case in this View, or else You will not only feel, but occasion Impotence. You will not only find, but increase Difficulty.

I would

* Isai. lxiii. 15.

† Matt. xiv. 31.

I would employ my Thoughts, neither on the Greatness nor Littleness of Faith; neither on the Ease nor Difficulty of believing. I would rather dwell upon the superabundant Grace of GOD, manifested in *CHRIST*, and granted to the most Unworthy. On this only proper Ground of Claim, I would endeavour, diligently endeavour, to assure my Soul of Salvation. In this Manner, waiting and praying for the divine SPIRIT, whose Office it is, to testify of *CHRIST*, and bring near the *REDEEMER's* Righteousness. Yet his Influences are not to supersede, but to encourage our own Efforts.—*Lay hold on eternal Life**; here is our Duty. *Our Sufficiency is of GOD*†; here is our Encouragement. And O! what a glorious Encouragement, to have the Arm of Omnipotence, for our Support and our Succour!

Ther. How, or in what Manner, does the Divine SPIRIT work Faith in the Heart of a Sinner? You wonder, perhaps, that I ask such a Question. But my Apprehensions are strangely dull, and my Views very dim, with regard to spiritual Things. If, in this Respect, I have any Sight, it is like his, who *saw Men as Trees walking*; saw these several Objects, but so obscurely, so confusedly, that He could not distinguish one from the other, only by the Circumstance of Motion.

Asp. The most inlightened Minds see only in part; and all have Reason, to make the blind Beggar's Supplication, their own Request; *LORD, that I may receive my Sight!*—The Operation of the Holy SPIRIT in producing Faith, is thus described by a Master in *Israel*; “The Divine SPIRIT

* 1 Tim. vi. 19.

† 2 Cor. iii. 5.

DIALOGUE XVI. 363

“SPIRIT brings *CHRIST* and his Righteousness nigh unto Us in the Promise of the Gospel ; clearing at the same Time our Right and Warrant to intermeddle with all, without Fear of vicious Intromission ; encouraging and enabling to a Measure of confident Application, and taking Home all to Ourselves, freely, without Money, and without Price.”

Ther. The true Belief, is so refined and exalted a Virtue, that I very much question, whether I shall ever be able attain it.

Asp. The true Belief is never to be considered, in the Light You mention. Not as a refined and exalted Virtue ; but as a Receiving of those Benefits, which, received and enjoyed, are the Source of all virtuous and godly Affections. When, proceeding upon the divine Grant, You behold *CHRIST* as your Righteousness and Strength, then You truly believe. You believe that Truth, which can never disappoint nor fail. You receive that Gift, which enriches with Grace, and entitles to Glory.

Ther. Is not your Definition of Faith very refined and exalted ?

Asp. Give me Leave to enquire, how You became acquainted with my Definition of Faith ?

Ther. I am not so inattentive a Reader of your Letters, as to forget your Account of this momentous Point. “ Faith, You say, is a real Persuasion *,
“ warranted

* *Budæus* and *Stephens* derive the original Word from *πεισθαι*, He is persuaded: and, I think, very properly. For, whatever We believe, of that We have a real Persuasion.—The latter most accurate and masterly Critic gives

“ warranted by GOD’s Word, that the blessed
 “ JESUS has shed his Blood for *my Sins*; has
 “ fulfilled all Righteousness in *my Stead*; and ob-
 “ tained eternal Redemption for *me*.”

Asp. Where is the extraordinary Refinement of all this? Nothing can be more plain; more simple; or better suited to the meanest Capacity.—Where is the unfurmountable Difficulty of all this? To believe such Things, is not Work or Labour, but Rest and Peace.—It is nothing more than crediting a Report. A Report, made by infinite Veracity, for Men to believe. A Report, made by infinite Goodness, for sinful Men to believe. Were not our Minds strangely prejudiced, and unaccountably darkened, nothing would appear more becoming and reasonable; nothing would prove more practicable and delightful.

Ther. Does Faith then amount to a Persuasion?

Asp. The Apostle, describing the Faith of the ancient Saints, declares; *They saw the Promises afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them.* They saw the Promises of Salvation, by a REDEEMER to come; this implies a Knowledge of them—they were *persuaded*; this implies a Conviction of their certain Truth—they *embraced* * them; this denotes an Application of all to themselves. And these Things were written for our Example; that We should go and embrace them likewise.

The
 gives this Interpretation of *εἰς*. *Persuasio certa, quam in nobis efficit Spiritus Sanctus, de Salute in Christo promissa, quam sibi quisque credendo applicat.* To corroborate which Exposition, He adds; *Hac etiam in Significatione Nomen Fidei a Theologis Latinis receptum fuit.*

* Heb. xi. 13.

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The same Apostle, enlarging on the Faith of Abraham, adds; *Being fully persuaded, that what GOD had promised, He was able also to perform* *. Here, You see, is *Persuasion*—full Persuasion—first, of GOD's Will, because He had promised; then, of his Power to accomplish his Word, even though natural Impossibilities stood in the Way. In this twofold Persuasion, the Faith of our Father Abraham consisted. And We are called to tread in the Steps of his Faith; consequently, to be persuaded of GOD's Will to save Us, from Sin and Hell; of his Power to save Us by the Blood and Righteousness of his SON.

Ther. Is Faith, christian Faith, a Persuasion that all these Blessings are for *me*? Does it imply a special Application of the Benefits to a Man's own Self?

Asp. Don't You wish, that it may imply and comprehend all this? Is it not infinitely desirable? Will it not be inexpressibly comfortable? If it really was Matter of doubtful Disputation, methinks, We should long to have it ascertained and established. But, blessed be the divine Compassion, it is as little to be doubted, as it is earnestly to be desired.

Hear what a very valuable Writer delivers on this Subject. Exhorting to believe on the LORD JESUS, He thus explains his Meaning; "That is, be verily persuaded in your Heart, that JESUS CHRIST is yours, and that You shall

* Rom. iv. 21. Compare Rom. xiv. Ver. 14. with Ver. 22. There, *I know and am persuaded*, is the apostolical Exposition of the Word *Faith*. See also 2 Tim. i. 12. Where *πιστευω* is explanatory of *πεπιστευκα*. *I am persuaded*, gives the true Meaning of *I have believed*.

“ shall have Life and Salvation by Him ; that what-
 “ soever *CHRIST* did for the Redemption of
 “ Mankind, He did it for You.”

If this Writer's Opinion has not Weight enough
 to incline the Scale, hear our own Church. You
 once apprehended, that my Attachment to the
 Church of *England* was unsettled and wavering.
 Judge now, who has most thoroughly imbibed her
 Doctrines, and is most invariably tenacious of her
 true Interests.—The first Part of the Homily con-
 cerning the Sacrament, addresses each Reader in
 particular, and gives Him this Definition of Faith.

“ It is a Belief, not only that the Death of
 “ *CHRIST* is available, for the Remission of
 “ Sins, and Reconciliation with *GOD* ; but
 “ also that He made a full and sufficient Sacrifice
 “ *for Thee*, a perfect Cleansing for *thy Sins*.”

If You acquiesce not in either of these Deter-
 minations, hear an infallible Umpire. *I live*, says
 the Apostle *Paul*, by Faith in the *SON of GOD* ;
 or, to express myself in a more clear and deter-
 minate Manner, I live by a firm Persuasion, that
He loved me, and gave Himself for me. This paci-
 fies my Conscience. This is the Source of my
 Joy, and the Motive to my Obedience. In short ;
 this is the Principle of my whole spiritual Life.

My Notion of Faith, You see, is not without a
 Precedent. It is undeniably the Voice of our Estab-
 lishment ; it is apparently the Sense of Scripture ;
 and it gives Us a *clear intelligible Idea*, suited to the
 most common Acceptation of the Word. Such
 as would naturally arise in the Mind of a Stranger,
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inquire into the Purport of our Religion, or consider the Language of our Bible.

Ther. How suited to the most common Acceptation of the Word?

Asp. When You sent a Message to your Tenant—who, in his last Sickness, expressed so much Uneasiness on account of his numerous Family, and embarrassed Circumstances—assuring Him, that you had canceled the Bond, and forgiven his Debt. When You told the poor Woman—whose Husband fell from the loaded Waggon, and broke both his Legs—that you would order a Surgeon to attend Him, and would continue his weekly Pay. *How* did they regard, *how* receive your promised Kindness? *So* let Us credit the gracious Declarations of our GOD; *so* receive the joyful Report of his Gospel; and then we shall answer the Import of the Word *Faith*—then we shall truly *believe*.

Ther. Where have We, in Scripture, any Thing parallel or similar to these Instances?

Asp. Have You never read the Words of *Micah*; *Who is a GOD-like unto Thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and passeth by Transgression* *? Here is the gracious Declaration—*He will turn again; He will have Compassion upon Us; He will subdue our Iniquities* †. Here is the joyful Report.—And why my Friend, why should We pay less Credit to the ever-living JEHOVAH, than to a Man “whose Breath is in his Nostrils?” Is there Treachery with the HOLY ONE of *Israel*? Does the LORD make, and then violate his Promise?

Ther. GOD has never violated his Promise, when it was expressly made, and particularly applied.

* Mic. vii. 18.

† Mic. vii. 19.

plied. But, in this Circumstance, there is a wide Difference between the Case of your Friend and the Case of his poor People. I *named* the Object of my Compassion, in one of the Instances; and made a *personal* Application, in the other. Neither of which is done in the Scriptures.—I don't find it any where revealed in the Bible, That *CHRIST* shed his Blood *for me* in particular. Neither have I read, in the old Testament or the new, That the *LORD JESUS* fulfilled all Righteousness *for Theron*. Therefore I cannot see, what Ground I have to believe this Proposition, from any scriptural Authority.

Asp. But my Friend, it is revealed and You have read, That the *LORD JESUS* shed his Blood for Sinners. And are You excluded from the Benefit? When an Act of Indemnity is published, even the greatest Transgressors, the Ring-leaders in the Rebellion, have nothing else to do, but only to enquire, whether *they* are *excepted*. They are not to expect, that their Names should be mentioned, as the particular Objects of their Sovereign's Favour. It is sufficient, abundantly sufficient, if they are not particularly disclaimed. If this is not done, they may, they ought, they do, most confidently claim the royal Clemency in behalf of themselves. So ought You and I to act, in the important Case under Consideration.

Farther; You are not unacquainted with the History of the three Children, condemned by *Nebuchadnezzar* to the burning fiery Furnace. You have read, in the old Testament, an Account of *their* Faith; and You find it proposed, in the new

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Testament, as a Model for *ours*.—Let Us then consider, What their Faith was. Did they say within themselves? “GOD is able, ’tis true, and “willing to deliver his Servants. This is affirmed in the Books of *Moses* and the Prophets. But “We no where find it is asserted, that He is willing to deliver *Us*; to deliver *Shadrach, Meshet,* “and *Abednego* from this horrible Death.”—Not such their Method of arguing. On the contrary; they assured themselves, that what the LORD had promised to his Servants in general, He would make good to them in particular. Hear their own Words. They are worthy to be had in everlasting Remembrance. *Our GOD, whom We serve, is able to deliver Us from the burning fiery Furnace; and He will deliver Us out of thine Hand, O King.* This was their Profession. This their Confidence.—Since We are called to an Imitation of their Faith, ought not such to be the Language of our Souls? “Our REDEEMER, in whom We trust, “is able to save Us to the uttermost; and He “will save Us, from thy Guilt, O Sin; from “thy Malice, O Satan.”

Ther. Still, if I am not named, methinks, I should be pointed out, by some distinguishing Circumstances. This is the Way of Scripture. *Antiochus*, the Persecutor of the *Jews*, is not indeed named by the Prophet *Daniel*. But He is painted in such very significant Colours, as most evidently declare, for whom the Picture was drawn. It is not expressly said, either in the second Epistle to the *Thessalonians*, or in the whole Book of the *Revelation*, that the *Popish* Faction is Antichrist. But it has so many of his Features, that (as a judicious

dicious Person said) if an Hue and Cry was made for the latter, I should, without any Scruple, apprehend the former.

Asp. Will this content You? Will this be sufficient to persuade You? Then it is very fully and very exactly done.—When the Grace of GOD is revealed, the Objects of this ineffable Goodness are characterized; and I am beyond Measure mistaken, if You do not find Yourself in the Number.

They are described by their *Family*, their *Disposition*, their *Practice*.—What says eternal Wisdom, when she makes a Tender of her inestimable Blessings? *To You, O Men*, not to fallen Angels, *I call*; and *my Voice is*, not to this Man or that Man exclusively, but *to the Sons of Men* indefinitely*. Pray, have You no Relation to this Family?—What says the holy Apostle, when He publishes the unalterable Counsels of Heaven? *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that CHRIST JESUS came into the World to save*—the Upright? the Unblameable? Was this the Case, our Hopes would be covered with a Cloud; or rather, totally and finally eclipsed. But see! they are clear as the Light, and conspicuous as the Noon-Day. For He came (cheering, charming Word!) He came to save *Sinners*†. Cannot You discern your Name in this List? I am sure, I can see mine written, as it were, in Capitals.

Consonant to all which, is the Declaration of another sacred Envoy. Who, speaking of his celestial MASTER, says; *He suffered*—the PRINCE of Peace, the MONARCH of the Universe, *suffered*—for whom? They, in whose

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* Prov. viii. 4.

† 1 Tim. i. 15.

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DIALOGUE XVI. 371

Behalf this matchless Ransom was paid, must have an undeniable Right, to look upon Redemption as their own. And blessed, for ever blessed be GOD, it is most peremptorily said, He suffered *for the Unjust* *.—Now can You say, That You are not comprehended in this, or the preceding Descriptions? Do they not resemble and represent *Theron*, as *Face answers to Face in the Water*?

Theron. This I cannot deny. This is certainly true.

Assp. That no Part of our Character might be omitted, and no Sort of our Misery pass unrelieved, it is farther declared; *When We were without Strength, CHRIST died for the Ungodly* †. When We were ungodly, and considered only as ungodly Creatures; neither possessed of any Thing amiable, nor having the least Ability to acquire it; nay, when We were chargeable with horrid Guilt, and incapable of expiating a single Offence; *then*, even THEN *CHRIST* died, and for such abominable Wretches he died.

To sum up the whole Evidence. Are We not of the *human* Family? Are We not, in our Spirit and Behaviour, *Sinners*? Have We not been *unjust* † towards our Fellow-creatures, and *ungodly* towards our great CREATOR? Are We not, in all these Respects, *without Strength*, to recover Ourselves; or make any Satisfaction for our Transgressions?—If We are (and upon these Questions, Incredulity itself will scarcely demur) let Us not

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frowardly

* 1 Pet. iii. 18.

† Rom. v. 6.

‡ He is unjust towards his Neighbour, who neglects to love his Neighbour as *himself*. And if this is the Standard, who has not fallen short?

frowardly reject, rather let Us thankfully receive, those spiritual Treasures; which, by virtue of the afore-cited Conveyance, are made over to *such* People. Which, by several other Clauses in the Will and Testament of our crucified LORD, evidently devolve to *such* Persons.

Ther. Is it possible, *Aspasio*? Can We be warranted and encouraged to receive these Treasures, in a Capacity and under a Denomination, which I should think more likely to exclude Us; disinherit Us; and overthrow all our Pretensions?

Asp. This may seem strange, but it is true. All the Blessings of the Gospel proceed upon a Supposition of Sinfulness. *CHRIST* is made *Wisdom* unto his People; but what Occasion for the Accession of Wisdom, unless it be in the Case of Ignorance and Folly? *CHRIST* is made *Righteousness*; but who can stand in need of a justifying Righteousness, if they are not in themselves unprofitable and guilty? *CHRIST* is made *Sanctification*; and does not this imply a State of Corruption to be remedied, a Body of Sin to be destroyed? *CHRIST* is made *Redemption*; and from what are Persons redeemed, but from Chains and Bondage, from Misery and Ruin, from all Manner of Evil?

It is also a most precious and invaluable Truth. Such as I would hold fast, and never, never let go. When I search for my own Endowments, I find nothing that I dare venture to plead. Being, in my best Moments, and amidst my choicest Duties, a Sinner. As this is, at all times, my undoubted Character, I have at all times, an undoubted Warrant to say, The Uncreated WISDOM

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DIALOGUE XVI. 373

calletb me: the blessed *JESUS* came to *save me*: the Great *MESSIAH* suffered Death *for me*.

Let me illustrate the Point.—*Romulus*, You know, the Founder of the *Roman* Empire, was a poor Prince: had but a Handful of Subjects, and very scanty Territories. What Expedient could He devise, to enlarge the Boundaries of the one, and augment the Number of the other? He issued a Proclamation, addressed to Outlaws and Criminals; all that were involved in Debt, or obnoxious to Punishment. Promising, that as many as would settle under his Dominion, should be secured from Prosecution, and vested with considerable Privileges.—We will suppose a Person in those distressed Circumstances. Upon hearing the welcome Invitation, He hangs down his Head, and with a dejected Air, cries; “I am a *Debtor*, I am a *Criminal*, “and therefore unworthy of the royal Protection.” What Answer should be made to such a dispirited Complainer? Make the same to Yourself, whenever You are inclined to renew the present Objections.—Remembering, that the infinite and eternal *SOVEREIGN*, to display the Magnificence of his Majesty, and manifest the Riches of his Goodness, has commissioned his Ambassadors to publish in every Nation under Heaven—“That all unhappy “Sinners, who are *oppressed* by the Devil and liable “to Damnation, may come to *CHRIST*. May “look upon *CHRIST* as their Ransom and “Righteousness. May, in this Manner, obtain “Pardon, Justification, and all the Privileges of “Children.”

Ther. At this rate, the vilest *Miscreants* have as clear, nay have the very same Warrant to believe in

374 DIALOGUE XVI.

CHRIST, and receive his Salvation, as the highest Saints.

Asp. The very same. In this Respect there is no Difference. All have sinned, and must sue for spiritual Blessings, not as deserving, but as *guilty* Creatures; must receive them, not as the Recompence of their own Worth, but as the Issues of infinite Mercy.

The Promise is express and unlimited, *Whosoever* believeth in *CHRIST*, shall not be ashamed. Here is no Pre-eminence of the *Jew* above the *Greek*. No Precedence given to the Man of Decency and Sobriety, before the shameless and abandoned Profligate.—This is farther confirmed by undoubted Fact. *St. Peter*, speaking of the vilest Miscreants, says; *GOD gave them the HOLY GHOST, even as He did unto Us; and put no Difference between Us and them* *. They were altogether as welcome to *CHRIST* and his Salvation, as We the Apostles of the *LORD*.

Should You ask the highest Saints, On what their Hopes are grounded? This, or something to this Effect, would be their Reply—"On the Grant of *CHRIST* and his Salvation, most clearly set forth, in the Scriptures of Truth. There We hear it declared; *Unto You*, though Gentiles and Idolaters, *is preached the Remission of Sins* †. As a Blessing procured by *CHRIST*, and now presented to your Souls, on the same Terms as Light is presented to your Eyes.—There We see it recorded; *This Man receiveth Sinners* ‡. Yes; He, who is *GOD* and Man in one *CHRIST*, openeth his Arms; open-

* Acts xv. 8, 9. † Acts xiii. 38. ‡ Luke xv. 2.

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“eth his Heart; and receiveth Sinners, to a Participation of Himself and his heavenly Riches. “Receiveth those Sinners, who were not only the “Scorn of Pharisaical Pride, but the very Dis- “grace of human Nature.—There We read the “following Decree, issued from the Court of Hea- “ven, and registered for the Comfort of a guilty “World. *The Promise*, relating to Forgiveness “of Sins and the SPIRIT of Grace, *is to You*. “Though You have persecuted and murdered the “LORD JESUS, You may, without any “Scruple or Delay, apply it to Yourselves. Nay “more; You may carry it home *to your Children*, “and bid them be Sharers of the Blessing. It is “an unsearchable Treasure, which You may free- “ly enjoy; and an inestimable Portion, which “they may as freely inherit. What is more graci- “ous still; it is *to all that are afar off*: whether “literally afar off, by living in remote heathen “Climes; or spiritually afar off, by deeply revolt- “ing from their Duty. In short; it is *to as many “as the LORD our GOD*, by the Preaching “of his most blessed Gospel, *shall call* *.”

Ther.

* *Acts* ii. 39. It has been objected, That the Passage, produced by *Aspasio*, does not exactly suit his Purpose. “Because, the People, to whom the Apostle speaks, “were, not the Congregation in general, but those par- “ticular Hearers, who were *pricked in their Hearts*; that “is, were endued with godly Sorrow, and savingly “changed.”

To which I reply, by putting a Query upon the Ob- jection, and lodging a Caveat against the Interpretation. —First for the Objection; “The People, to whom the “Apostle speaks, were, not the Congregation in gene- “ral, but those particular Hearers, who were pricked

376 D I A L O G U E XVI.

Ther. This is a pleasing Supposition. But it would be more satisfactory, if You should refer me to

“ in their Hearts.” Does the Apostle address himself to those *only*? I think not. I hope not. Because, this would represent the Gifts of GOD, as depending on some Qualifications in Man. Consequently, would destroy the Freeness of the Gift, and eclipse the Glory of Grace. Whereas, if We suppose the Promise addressed to Sinners, as Sinners, without any Thing to distinguish one from another; then, all is perfectly free, and Grace shines forth in its native Lustre.—The Promise is extended to the whole Audience, *every One of You*. To *their Children*; Their Children that were at Home; Their Children that were unborn; Their Children of the latest Generations. And these, I presume, could neither be pricked in their Hearts, nor savingly changed.—Besides; it seems plain, from the Course of the Narrative, that the Address is directed, not to any select Number, but to the promiscuous Multitude. For, the discriminating Sentence follows in Verse 41. *Then they*, amongst this promiscuous Multitude, *that gladly received his Word, were baptized*.

“ *Were pricked in the Heart*; that is, were endued “ with godly Sorrow, and savingly changed.” Against this Interpretation I am to lodge a Caveat.—*Cain*, and *Saul*, and *Judas*, *Καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ*, were pricked in Heart. They had Stings of Anguish in their Consciences, and the Dagger of Distress in their Souls. Yet none ever imagined, that they were truly converted.—These People were ignorant of *CHRIST* and the Way of Salvation. *What shall We do?* implies their Want of this necessary Knowledge. They did not so much as see the Place of Refuge; therefore, could not be arrived at it. Could not be safe, or savingly changed.—Not to multiply Arguments. The Apostle must certainly be the best Judge of his Hearers State, and the best Expofitor of his own Meaning. Did *He* consider this Circumstance in so advantageous a Light? No; He neither regards it, as constituting the Grace of Repentance, nor springing from the promised Gift of the

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to any of the Saints, actually speaking in this Manner?

Asp. Isaiah, You will allow, was a Saint of no inferior Rank. Yet He breathes the Spirit I am describing, and acts the Part I am vindicating. Turn to that Epitome of the Gospel, his *fifty-third* Chapter. There You may observe Him, claiming a Share in the greatest of all Privileges, Salvation through the Blood of *CHRIST*. How does He advance and maintain his Claim? Not in the Capacity of a *sanctified*, but under the Character of a *sinful* Person. These are his Words; *The LORD hath laid on him*, on his Son *CHRIST JESUS*, *the Iniquity of Us all* *. Of me, and of my Brethren in Piety, does He mean? No; but of me, and of my Fellow-transgressors. This is evidently implied.

HOLY GHOST; it was not Faith in *CHRIST* for the Remission of Sins, neither was it a Pledge of Security from the Wrath, which was coming on that untoward Generation. This is evident from his own Words—*Repent—for the Remission—Ye shall receive—Save Yourselves*. A Way of speaking, which supposes those, whom He addresses, to be destitute of the Blessings mentioned.

This, if I mistake not, is the Truth of the Case. Those People, convinced of their horrible Wickedness in crucifying the SON of GOD, were filled with the most alarming Apprehensions. As yet, they had no Notion of a divine REDEEMER, dying for his *every Murderers*. They were, therefore, under what some Writers call, a Law-Work. And can the Law, which worketh Wrath, produce a saving Change, or rather the Change which accompanieth Salvation? This would take away the Honours of *CHRIST*, and transfer them to *Moses*? This would confound the Letter which killeth, with the Spirit that giveth Life.

* *Isai. liii. 6.*

378 D I A L O G U E XVI.

plied in the Clause I have quoted. In the preceding Part of the Verse, the Prophet explains Himself, and leaves no Room for Hesitation. *All We, like Sheep, have gone astray; We have turned every One to his own Ways.* Yet our Transgressions, our Iniquities, the GOD of all Mercy has transferred from us, and charged upon his beloved SON.—As the vilest Miscreants are indispensibly obliged to confess the former, they have an apparent Right to profess, to assert, and to believe the latter.

Ther. The vilest Miscreants have a *Right*—an *apparent* Right to believe—to believe that all *their* Sins are laid upon *CHRIST*! This is surprising Doctrine. I know not how to credit it, though You take so much Pains to establish it.

Asp. It puts me in Mind of that memorable Prediction, recorded by *Habakkuk*, and quoted by *Peter*. *Behold! I work a Work, of such immensely rich and inconceivably free Goodness, that You shall not believe, even though a Man declare it unto You.*—The LORD, I trust, who opened *Hagar's* Eyes, to discern the Fountain of Water, for the Refreshment of her Son, will open my Friend's Eyes, to discern this infinitely more precious Fountain, for the Consolation of his Soul.

O the Riches, the unsearchable Riches of the Kindness and Love of GOD! He makes a Grant of *CHRIST* and his heavenly Kingdom, to the most contemptible Wretches on the Face of the Earth; yea, to the most detestable Creatures on this Side Hell!—At this You wonder. At this We ought all to wonder. This will be the Wonder of Saints and Angels, through a boundless Eternity. Yet though We wonder, let Us not gainsay

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nor murmur. Let not the Creature refuse the Bounty of the CREATOR, because it is unutterably great. Neither let the elder Brother repine, because the young Prodigal enters at the same Door, and is admitted to the same Table with Himself.

I have alledged the Testimony of the Saints, let me add the Decision of their King. *GOD so loved the World*, even that World, which, the Apostle *John* assures Us, is not only fallen, but lieth in Wickedness. Yet, fallen and apostate as it is, *GOD so loved it, that He gave his only begotten SON*, to bring in a perfect Righteousness, and obtain eternal Redemption.

Ther. But the Question is, For whom?

Asp. For the World most certainly. None else, Nothing else, is mentioned. It is not said, For the choicest Part of the World; its best Inhabitants, picked and culled from the Refuse. But for the corrupt and vicious World, these Things are given. That, being believed and accepted, they may be saving Health to their Souls.

Ther. "For the World *."—Does this general Form of Expression warrant any One, to make a particular Application of *CHRIST* and all his Benefits, to Himself?

Asp. Pray do You find any Restriction of the Grant? Is any Exception made, relating to this or that particular Set of Men? Is not the Extent of the Gift as wide as the World? If so, it warrants any One, it authorizes every One †, to
make

* John vi. 51.

† If there were any Man, to whom the Grant of a SAVIOUR, did not particularly belong; that Person

make a special Application of *CHRIST* to Himself.

In other Instances, such a general Expression, not only warrants, but produces a particular Application. When *Jonah*, in pursuance of the divine Command, *cried and said; Yet forty Days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.* Here was no particular Mention of Man, Woman, or Child. Neither the King, nor the Nobles, nor the Commons were specified. Much less was each and every Inhabitant threatened by Name. Nevertheless, this general Denunciation alarmed them all; was influential on them all. Infomuch that *the People of Nineveh believed GOD, and proclaimed a Fast, and put on Sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least* *. —*They believed*; hence We learn the true Nature of Believing. “*GOD speaks to me*; and what “*he speaks, He will perform*”; is its genuine Profession. Hence We likewise discover, *who* they are which ought, in this Manner to apply the general Word; *all, from the least even unto the greatest*.

Ther. The Case is not parallel, *Aspasio*. This was a Denunciation of Vengeance, not a Promise of Grace.

Asp. And can You, *Theron*, can You suppose? That *GOD* is more liberal of Vengeance, than He is communicative of Grace. Vengeance is his strange Work, but in Mercy and Loving-kindness He delighteth.—Are We bound to believe and apply his dreadful Threatenings? Not allowed to

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son would have no Warrant to believe; He would do right in disbelieving; what the Scriptures represent as the greatest Sin, would become his bounden Duty.

* *Jonah* iii. 5.

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believe and apply his precious Promises? Surely, the LORD's Ways are not so unequal.—When the Law says, *Cursed is every One, that continueth not in all Things* *; should not every Hearer take this to Himself, and submit to the Sentence of just Condemnation? When the Gospel says, *HE came to save that which is lost* †; should not every Hearer take this also to himself, and embrace the Tender of free Salvation?

However, if You dislike this Instance, I will give You another; which is not of the vindictive, but of the beneficent Kind.—When the *Manna* made its first Appearance in the Wilderness; when the *Israelites* knew, neither what it was, nor for whom intended; both these Particulars were explained by *Moses*. *This is the Bread which the LORD hath given You to eat* ‡. No Mention is made of any individual Person. Yet the whole Congregation, looked upon this as an undoubted Permission, both for themselves and their Children, to gather, to fetch home, and to use the miraculous Food.

Ther. GOD gave the *Manna* to all the *Israelites*, both good and bad. But does He give *CHRIST* with this unlimited Freeness?

Ass. Our LORD Himself, alluding to this very Miracle, vouchsafes You an Answer. *My FATHER giveth You the true Bread from Heaven* ||. The Language is nearly the same as *Moses* used; and it expresses the very same unlimited Freeness.—*My FATHER giveth You his incarnate SON*, and his divinely excellent Righteousness. These

* Gal. iii. 10. † Matt. xviii. 11. ‡ Exod. xvi. 15.
|| John vi. 32.

These are Bread indeed ; Bread, which came down from the Regions of Heaven ; and Bread, which nourisheth the Soul for the Joys of Heaven.—This my FATHER *giveth You* ; though not in actual Possession, yet in Right to possess. This He giveth You *, by Way of free indefinite Grant. Without which, any Attempt to possess, even in the most upright of Men, would be illegal and presumptuous. By virtue of which Grant, the Bad as well as the Good—it is your own Expression, and therefore I make Use of it. Though, in Reality, None are good, till they receive *CHRIST*. Which, were his Benefits of the exclusive Sort, would be Cause of infinite Anxiety to Mankind. But our great Consolation is, that One as well as Another, the idolatrous *Gentile* as well as the professing *Israelite*, has an unquestionable Warrant to claim them for Himself.

Ther. Unquestionable! Is not this Expression too peremptory? That such a Grant should be made to *Believers*, I can easily conceive. But is it made to Sinners—to any Sinners—to the most abandoned Sinners?

Asp. Yes, *Theron*, to Sinners. And when Sinners receive the Grant, then they commence Believers.—Was it made to Believers only, no Man living would inherit the Blessing. Because all Men are, by the Depravity and Impotence of their Nature, originally concluded under Sin and Unbelief. It is there-

fore,

* “ The *Receiving* of *CHRIST* necessarily presupposes this *Giving* of Him. There may indeed be a “ Giving, where there is no Receiving ; for a Gift may “ be refused. There may also be a *Taking*, where there “ is no Giving ; which is a presumptuous Action, without “ Warrant. But there can be no Place for receiving “ *CHRIST*, where there is not a Giving of Him before.” *Boston's Notes.*

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fore, a Source of Comfort and a Store-house of Relief, for the most guilty Creatures, even in their most desperate Circumstances.

What said our *LORD JESUS*? My Father giveth *You*; that is, the People who stood around, and heard his gracious Voice. Many of whom were in a carnal State habitually, and even then were in a murmuring wicked Frame *.—What says his Prophet? He cries out in a Rapture; O my lost Brethren, *to Us a Child is born; to Us a Son is given!* Not to Us, who were regenerate, and become Children of Light. But to Us Children of fallen *Adam*; to Us undone Sinners of Mankind; who *walked in Darknefs, and dwelt in the Shadow of Death* †.—What saith *GOD the LORD*? He that created the Heavens, and stretched them out? *I will give Thee*, meaning his beloved SON, *for a Covenant*; it is not said, of Believers, but *of the People*; it is not said, of new Creatures, but *of the Gentiles*: Who were the vilest of all Creatures, or, as You have properly spoke, the most abandoned Sinners.

That we may understand more clearly the Signification of these Terms, and see the true Extent of this Gift, it is added; *I will give Thee to open the blind Eyes, and to bring out the Prisoners from the Prison* ‡. Miserable and guilty Wretches, blinded by the Devil, and enslaved to their Lusts; these are not set aside. Nay; these are expressly named. They are the very *Patentees* in the heavenly Grant. An obedient and a dying SAVIOUR is as much given to them, that they may receive Him, and be saved; as the City of Refuge was appointed for the Manslayer, that He might fly thither, and be secure;

or

* John vi. 25, 41. † Isai. ix. 2, 6. ‡ Isai. xlii. 6, 7.

or as the brazen Serpent was lifted up on a Pole, that the wounded *Israelite* might look to it, and be healed.

Here then the Grant and the Gift are mentioned; the Persons, to whom the Grant is made, and for whom the Gift is provided, are specified. They are Sinners; *blinded* and *enslaved* Sinners; or, if there be any other more obnoxious Sort, they are all comprehended in this one Word, *Gentiles*. Only allow the divine Speaker to be sincere; then We shall see, in these precious Texts, a most cheering Hope even for the vilest Sinners. Hope, that they may be justified, escape the Curse, and find Favour with GOD. Nay; We may boldly affirm; That, proceeding on these Words of the eternal KING, even the vilest Sinner is allowed, is authorized to say; "GOD gives me his SON, "to be my Covenant Surety. I take Him at his "Word. The SURETY and all his Merits, "and all his Benefits, are mine."

Divinely rich Bounty! Enough to charm and astonish the Universe. But not too great for the infinite JEHOVAH to exercise. O, let Us not refuse what, on this Consideration, the unerring SPIRIT calls *our own Mercy* *. Let Us adore the Beneficence of our GOD. Let Us believe his promising Word. And, in this sweet, this easy Manner, obtain both present and final Salvation.

Ther. I have one Scruple more, which, at this Instant, arises in my Mind. *The Righteousness of CHRIST*, according to the Apostle, *is upon all that believe*. Therefore, it is not the Sinner's, but the Believer's Portion.

Asp. If this was true, sure the Gospel, which reveals this Righteousness, could not be glad Tidings.

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VOL. III.

ings. I will suppose a Congregation of ignorant and ungodly People, of Heathens and Idolaters. The Minister lifts his Voice and cries; "The Righteousness of GOD the SAVIOUR is not for You. You are not Believers, and therefore have no Right to receive the Blessing."—What a discouraging, nay, what a killing Message!—Whereas, if the Ambassador of *CHRIST* makes this Proclamation; "I know, You are an Assembly of vile and abominable Sinners. Nevertheless, I am commissioned to preach glad Tidings to You. The infinitely glorious SON has died for such Transgressors as You. And the infinitely gracious FATHER freely offers his perfect Righteousness to You." This is indeed a joyful sound.

Besides, *Theron*, You don't attend to the Apostle's Expression. He says, the Righteousness of GOD is upon all them that believe. Such Persons actually possess it. They wear the Robe. They are cloathed with Salvation. And here lies the Difference between the vile Miscreant and the real Saint. Not that one was originally better than the other: not that one has a clearer Grant of *CHRIST* than the other: but the latter has put on the Wedding-garment, and uses it to his unspeakable Honour and Happiness; the former is admonished to throw aside his filthy Rags, and invited to put on this heavenly Raiment.

Ther. Let me recollect—*CHRIST* is given for the World, the apostate World, to believe on—*CHRIST* has died, not for the Righteous, but for the Ungodly—*CHRIST* came in the Flesh to save Sinners, even the chief of Sinners.—Well, *As-*

passio, if these Things are true (and how can they be otherwise? since they are the express Doctrine of Scripture) it is pity, but they were more generally known. For my part, I must confess, they are not only new, but strange to me. Though I have read them in the Bible, yet when I come to consider them, and compare them with what passes in my Breast, I find they are quite contrary to my usual Ways of thinking.

Asp. You remind me of a valuable Person, whom I once numbered among my Acquaintance, and whose Way of thinking somewhat resembled your own. Will You give me leave to relate his Case?

Ther. Most gladly. It will be some Kind of Consolation to hear, that Others have laboured under the same Difficulties with myself, and been subject to the same Distresses. If I am informed of their *Deliverance* from those Distresses, it will be like shewing me an opened Door, for effecting my own Escape. If I am likewise acquainted with the *Manner* of their Deliverance, this will furnish me with a Clue to guide my Steps.

Asp. This Person was roused from a Habit of Indolence and Supineness, into a serious Concern for his eternal Welfare. Convinced of his depraved Nature and aggravated Guilt, He had recourse to the Scriptures, and to frequent Prayer. He attended the Ordinances of Christianity, and sought earnestly for an *assured Interest* in *CHRIST*. But found no steadfast Faith, and tasted very little Comfort. At length, He applied to an eminent Divine, and laid open the State of his Heart. Short, but weighty, was the Answer he received. "I perceive, Sir, the Cause of all your Distress. You do not,

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D I A L O G U E XVI. 387

“you will not, come to *CHRIST* as a Sinner.
 “This Mistake stands between your Soul and the
 “Joy of Religion. This detains you in the Gall
 “of Bitterness; and take heed, O! take heed,
 “lest it consign you over to the Bond of Iniquity.”
 This Admonition never departed from the Gentle-
 man’s Mind; and it became a happy Means of re-
 moving the Obstructions to his Peace.

Remember this little History, *Theron*; and may it
 prove as efficacious for your Good, as it is perti-
 nent to your Circumstances! Remember, that the
 free Grant of *CHRIST*, made in the Word of
 Truth, and addressed to Sinners of Mankind, is the
 only Basis and Ground-work of Faith. An Apostle,
 after all the Labours of his exemplary Life, can
 have no better. And a *Magdalene* or a *Manasseh*,
 as a Motive and Encouragement for their turning
 to the LORD, have the very same.

But we digress from the principal Subject. Since
 You disapprove *my* Account of Faith, I must desire
 You to favour me with a Description, more correct
 and unexceptionable. For, as You justly observed,
 this is a *very momentous* Article.—Is not *CHRIST*
 the Source of all spiritual Good, and Faith the main
 Channel of Conveyance? Surely then it should
 be made and kept, as clear as possible.—Is not
CHRIST the Foundation of all true Godliness,
 and Faith the Master-arch in this sacred Structure?
 Surely then it should be raised and turned, with the
 utmost Care.



DIALOGUE XVII.

THERON.



PALÆMON's Account is this—*Faith*, He says, is a firm Persuasion, that *JESUS CHRIST* has shed his Blood, and fulfilled all Righteousness; has sustained the Punishment due to Sin, and obtained full Reconciliation with *GOD*. That all this Grace, and each of these Benefits, are free, perfectly free; for You, for me, for others. In consequence of this Persuasion, the Sinner flies to *CHRIST*, comes to *CHRIST*, and trusts in *CHRIST* for his own Salvation.

Asp. I have the highest Regard for *Palemon's* Judgment; and I cannot but think, my Opinion is confirmed even by his.—The Act of *flying* to *CHRIST*, implies an Intention to get out of Danger; it implies a Discovery of *CHRIST*, as the appointed Safety; and consists in making Use of Him as such. When the Manslayer fled to the City of Refuge, He made Use of, that privileged Place for his own Protection. How can this be done,

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done, with regard to a bleeding, dying SAVI-
OUR, but only by a Persuasion that *He is mine?*
That his Sufferings were in *my* Stead, and that his
Death is *my* Safe-guard.—What is meant by *Coming*
to *CHRIST*, We may learn from *Jeremiah*. *Be-*
hold! We come unto Thee, for Thou art the LORD
our GOD. Coming, You see, includes or proceeds
upon a real Persuasion, that the LORD is *our*
GOD. While We are wholly destitute of this
Persuasion, We stand at a Distance, and our Souls
are afar off. We are never brought nigh; We ne-
ver come in the Prophet's Sense; till We are taught
to say, each One for Himself, *Thou art the LORD*
my GOD *.—The Act of *Trusting* in *CHRIST*
is much of the same Nature. It presupposes, that
CHRIST is the Trustee of the Covenant of
Grace; it proceeds upon a Conviction of his Faith-
fulness in executing the Office; and it is a solemn
Surrendering or Giving up the whole Affair of our
Salvation into his Hand. Giving it up, not in

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* *Jer. iii. 22*. This Text relates to the backsliding *Is-*
raelites. It is observable, that they do not lay Claim to the
LORD as their GOD, because they are Penitents. But
are encouraged to return, from the bare Belief of his gra-
cious Declarations. The Return of the Children of GOD,
after backsliding, is of the same Nature and proceeds
upon the same Grounds, as their first Approach. Ac-
cording to that invariable Rule, *As Ye have received*
CHRIST JESUS the LORD, so walk Ye in Him.

This Doctrine is taught, and represented under the
the same Image, *Isai. xlv. 24*. *To HIM shall Men come*.
What does this figurative Expression signify? The Pro-
phet himself answers our Question, and explains his own
Meaning. *Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I*
Righteousness. When People believe this in their Heart,
and profess this with their Mouth, *then* they come unto
the LORD.

390 D I A L O G U E XVII.

Uncertainty of Success (this would be *mistrusting*, rather than *trusting*) but with a Certainty, in some measure, suitable to the Fidelity and Ability of HIM, with whom We have to do.

If You still are doubtful, whether any such Persuasion is implied in *Trusting*, let Us choose a Referee. Let Us carry our Controversy to the King of *Israel*. Inquire of *David*, why He trusts in the LORD, and what he means by trusting? To both these Inquiries He answers distinctly and fully. "*The LORD is my high Tower, my Shield, and He in whom I trust* * . He is a Shield—He is my Shield —Of this I am persuaded, and therefore I trust in him : or this I believe, and in *so doing*, I trust on Him."

Ther. This Air of *Assurance*, which runs through all your Representations of Faith, appears somewhat presumptuous in my Eye. It is as if People pretended to know and claim their Seat in Heaven, before the Judgment Day.

Asp.

* *Psal.* cxliv. 2. See also *Psal.* xxxi. 14. *Isai.* xii. 2. and especially 2 *Kings* xviii. 30. Where *Rabshakeh*, the *Affyrian* General, gives Us an Exposition of the Word *trust*. This Man, unacquainted with theological Controversies and nice Distinctions; having no other Information, but what was derived from common Sense, and the common Principles of Mankind; sees all that We contend for, comprehended in the Expression, *Let not Hezekiah make You trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver Us.* To trust in the LORD, is, according to this *abnormis Sapiens*, to say from the Heart, and declare with the Mouth—The LORD will deliver—He will deliver Us—He will surely deliver Us.—Must it not be a Shame to Christians, if they have meaner Apprehensions of trusting in JEHOVAH, than a Heathen and an Idolater.

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DIALOGUE XVII. 391

Asp. And is this so strange or presumptuous a Thing? In former Ages, People made no Scruple to declare; *We know, that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, We have a Building of GOD, a House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.* And these are People, whom You need not blush to be like, nor be afraid to copy after.

The *Papists*, I own, take great Offence at the Word Assurance, and utterly explode the Doctrine *. But they are no infallible Guides, for Us to follow; neither are they very inviting Patterns, for Us to imitate. You and I, *Theron*, cannot reasonably be offended, at the Expression, or the Doctrine; if We recollect what We have been taught, in the first Stage of Life, and what is professed, in the last Scene of Mortality. We are taught, even from our Infancy, that the Sacrament of the LORD's Supper, is not only a Sign of Spiritual Grace, but a Pledge to assure Us thereof †. At the Interment of the Dead, We profess our sure and certain Hope of a Resurrection to eternal Life ‡. That this is always applied, with due Propriety, in our Burial-Service, I will not venture to assert.

B b 4

That

* One of their unrighteous Decrees, established by the Council of *Trent*, is; "If any shall say, that justifying Faith is nothing else, but a Confidence or Assurance of the Mercy of GOD, pardoning Sins for *CHRIST*'s Sake, let Him be accursed."—Must We not call the Assembly, which could pass such horrible Doctrine into a Law, *the Synagogue of Satan*? Ought We not to expostulate, with such a dogmatizing and damning Spirit, in the Words of the Apostle? *O full of all Subtily and all Mischief, thou Child of the Devil, thou Enemy of all Righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right Ways of the LORD?* Acts xiii. 10.

† Church Catechism.

‡ Burial-Office.

That it sufficiently countenances my Sentiments, None will undertake to deny. If this countenances, the Apostle authorizes them; when He addresses Us, with this very remarkable Exhortation; *Having therefore, Brethren, Boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of JESUS, let Us draw near with a true Heart in full Assurance of Faith**; with a firm Persuasion of Acceptance; with a certain Expectation of Success.

After all, if You dislike the Word Assurance, We will change it for the more softened, and more modestly-sounding Term, *Appropriation*.—St. Chrysostom says, *Η πίστις ιδιοποιείται τον Θεον* which is translated and expounded by a pious Divine of our own; “Faith, He tells Us, is a Work of the “**HOLY GHOST** in the Soul, enabling it “to appropriate the Blood and Righteousness of “**JESUS CHRIST**, for the Remission of Sin, “and its Justification unto eternal Life.”

Ther. You change Assurance for a more softened, not for a more intelligible Term. I must desire to know, what You mean by the Word Appropriation.

Asp. To appropriate, in the theological Sense, is to take home the Grace of GOD; or apply to One's Self, what lies in the common indefinite Grant of the Gospel. Is **CHRIST** the Treasure hid in the Field? To appropriate this Treasure, is to receive and use it as our own Portion. Is **CHRIST** the Balm of Gilead, full of saving Health? To appropriate this Balm, is to take and apply it for the Recovery of our own Souls. And without such an Appropriation, how can We
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* Heb. x. 19, 20.

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* Isai, xlvi

D I A L O G U E XVII. 393

either be enriched by the former, or healed by the latter ?

Let me farther explain my Meaning, and exemplify the Position, by considering *CHRIST* in his several Offices. *CHRIST*, as a Priest, is made to guilty Creatures Righteousness. When We appropriate the Grace of our great HIGH PRIEST, this is the Language of our Hearts, *In the LORD have I Righteousness**.—*CHRIST*, as a Prophet, is made to ignorant Creatures Wisdom. When We appropriate the Benefits of our unerring PROPHET, this is the Persuasion of our Souls, *Tho' I sit in Darkness, the LORD will be a Light unto me*†.—*CHRIST*, as a King, is made unto depraved Creatures Sanctification. When We appropriate the Munificence of our Almighty KING, this is our comfortable Trust, *The LORD will deliver me from every evil Work*‡.

Ther. The Scripture never uses the Term *Appropriation*. Will it not draw off our Attention from the Form of sound Words, lest Us by the Apostle? Will it not lead Us into a Strife about Phrases, devised by human Wisdom? Perhaps, bewilder Us among Oppositions of Science, falsely so called? Some Persons, You must be sensible, have affirmed; That it is enough to know the Truth, and believe what *JESUS* has done. According to that which is written; *By his Knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many*.

Ans. Do You experience this to be enough, *Theron*? Is this sufficient to dispel your Fears, and calm your

* *Isai.* xlv. 24.

† *Mic.* vii. 8.

‡ *2 Tim.* iv. 18.

your Conscience? Does this comfort your Heart, and fill You with all Joy?

The scriptural Knowledge; that which the HOLY GHOST teaches; is of the appropriating Kind. And if the Doctrine be contained in Scripture, it should seem an over-refined Scrupulosity to cavil with the Diction.

By his Knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many. That is, by the Knowledge of Him, as our Atonement, and our Redemption; *who was wounded for our Sins, and bruised for our Iniquities.* Thus the Prophet expounds his own Text; and lends Us a Clue, that may lead Us into our LORD's Meaning, when He declares; *This is Life eternal, that they may know Thee the only true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST whom Thou hast sent.* That they may know Thee, O GOD, as completely reconciled, and infinitely gracious to them. That they may know JESUS CHRIST, as the sole Cause of this blessed Reconciliation; by satisfying Justice, and bringing in an everlasting Righteousness.

This is consonant to that general Maxim, laid down by the Apostle, *We have known and believed*—What? That GOD is Love? This is Part of the Truth, but not the whole.—That He exercises it freely, and with overflowing Abundance? Neither does this come up to the Measure of the Believer's Knowledge.—But We have known and believed *the special, the distinguishing Love, which GOD bath towards Us, in JESUS CHRIST.*—This is the Knowledge, which justifies the Ungodly, and sanctifies the Sinner. In this Knowledge, You see, there is an Application to Our-

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D I A L O G U E XVII. 395

selves; a Belief that the Blessing is our own; or, in other Words, an Appropriation, *Towards Us*.

Ther. So then an Application to Ourselves, or a Belief that the Blessings of the Gospel are our own, is what You mean by Appropriation.

Asp. Add, our own by Virtue of the divine Grant, and this is my very Meaning. That an Appropriation of this Kind is included in the Essence of Faith; is the Sentiment I would maintain.—Which Sentiment might be confirmed, if such Confirmation were demanded, by a Multitude of the most illustrious Witnesses. Witnesses so *illustrious*, that they were a Blessing to the World, and an Honour to human Nature. So *numerous*, that, without giving an Abstract of their Testimonies, it might seem tedious only to recite their Names *.

Ther.

* If the Reader should inquire after their Names, He will find *some* of them enumerated in the following Catalogue. *Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Beza, Bullinger, Bucer, Knox, Craig, Melvil, Bruce, Davidson, Forbes, &c.*—*Ursinus, Zanchius, Junius, Piscator, Rollock, Danaus, Wendelinus, Chamierus, Sharpus, Bodius, Pareus, Altingius, Triglandii (Gisbertus & Jacobus), Arnoldus, Maresius*; the four Professors at *Leyden, Wallæus, Rivetus, Polyander, Thysius*; *Wollebius, Heideggerus, Essenius, Turretinus, &c.*—Many eminent *British* Divines, Bishop *Babington, Davenant, Hall*; Mr. *Perkins, Pemble, Willet, Gouge, Rogers, Burges, Owen, Marshal, &c.*

If we were apparently and demonstrably in an Error, yet, to err with such Company, and in the Footsteps of such Guides, must very much tend to mitigate the Severity of Censure. But, I believe, few serious Persons will venture to charge Error and Delusion upon such a venerable Body of Protestant Divines; so eminent for their Learning; so exemplary for their Holiness; and whose Labours were so remarkably owned by GOD.

396 D I A L O G U E XVII.

Ther. I will dispense with your Recital of their Names, only let me have a Specimen of their Testimonies.

Assp. First, let me present You with Dr. Owen; than whom *England* has produced few Writers, either more judicious or more devout. "Faith, "He tells Us in his *Catechism*, is a gracious Resting "upon the free Promises of GOD in *JESUS* "CHRIST for Mercy, with a *firm Persuasion* of "Heart, that GOD is a reconciled Father to Us "in the SON of his Love."

Next, let me introduce an Author of Renown, from our Sister Country, *Scotland*. Mr. Davidson asking, "What is that Faith, which is the only "Instrument of this strait Conjunction between "CHRIST crucified and Us?" Teaches his Disciple to reply; "It is the *sure Persuasion* of the "Heart, that CHRIST, by his Death and Resurrection, *hath taken away our Sins*; and cloathing Us with his own Righteousness, has thoroughly restored Us to the Favour of GOD."

To these I would add the learned and justly celebrated *Altingius*, Professor of Divinity at *Heidelberg*. "Faith, He says, is a Knowledge of the Grace of "GOD in CHRIST, together with a fiduciary "Reliance on it, or an *Application* of it to a Man's "own Self."

These Testimonies are but as the Tythe to the whole Crop. Yet these are more than enough to exempt me from the Charge of Singularity. You will not wonder therefore, if I still abide by the good old Doctrine, which is espoused by so many of the ablest Judges; which was the darling Tenet of almost all our Reformers; and which is the
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avowed Belief, not of a few single Persons only, but of many famous Protestant Churches.

Ther. Pray let me hear, what the Protestant Churches say. Their Testimony, though not infallible, is doubtless very considerable.

Asp. The Testimony of the *English* Church is already produced. You shall now have the Declaration of the Church of *Scotland*. In her national Covenant, She has these memorable Words; “ We detest and refuse the usurped Authority of that *Roman* Antichrist, his *general* and *doubtful* Faith.” From which Words We naturally draw these two Conclusions—That, since the *Popish* Faith is a doubtful Faith, the *Protestant* Faith is an assured Faith—That, since the *Popish* Faith is a general one, the *Protestant* Faith must needs be a Faith of special Application.

Now let Us hear the unanimous Suffrage of the Churches of the *Palatinate*. It is enquired, in the twenty-first Question of their public *Catechism*, “ What is true Faith ?” To which this Answer is returned. “ It is not only an Assent to all the Truths, which GOD has revealed in his Word; but it is an *assured* Trust, wrought by the HOLY SPIRIT in my Heart, that Remission of Sins, compleat Righteousness, and eternal Life are given; freely given, not to others only, but to *myself*; and all this, from the mere Mercy of GOD, through the alone Merits of *CHRIST*.”

Omitting the Confessions of several other foreign Churches, I shall only subjoin the Doctrine of the *Dutch* Divines, as it is delivered in their *Brief Compendium of Christian Religion*. *Quest.* What is a sincere

398 D I A L O G U E XVII.

a sincere Faith? *Ans.* "It is a sure Knowledge of
"GOD and his Promises, revealed to Us in the
"Gospel; and a hearty *Confidence*, that all *my* Sins
"are forgiven, for *CHRIST*'s Sake."

With all these Testimonies, which are the Voice
of Nations, I have the Happiness to coincide. On-
ly some of them are much stronger, in displaying
and maintaining the special *Fiducia*, or appropriating
Persuasion.—From this View of Things, You will
at least allow, that the personal Application of
CHRIST, and the assured Confidence in *CHRIST*,
are not (as they have very indecently been called)
the Fiction of a crazy Brain.—Especially, as I ap-
prehend, the Determinations of Scripture, and
the Experience of scriptural Saints, are all on our
Side.

Ther. You have now brought the Cause to the
proper Bar. When a Question so important is de-
bated, and an Interest so momentous is concerned, I
cannot acquiesce in any Authority less than divine.
I cannot, and indeed I think, We ought not. No-
thing should satisfy Us on such an Occasion, but the
Word, which is unerring and decisive; the Word,
by which We are to stand or fall eternally. Whence
does it appear, that the Determinations of this di-
vine Word, are on your Side?

Asp. From the noblest Description of Faith,
which Language itself can form. The Writer
to the *Hebrews*, having mentioned the Life of
Faith, the Perseverance of Faith, and the End or
Reward of Faith, proceeds to a Definition of this
leading Grace. *Now Faith is the Substance of Things
hoped for, the Evidence of Things not seen* *.—The

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* Heb. xi. 1.

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Evidence *, exhibiting not a faint Surmise, but a clear Demonstration, both of invifible Blessings, and of our Right to enjoy them.—*The Substance* †, realizing what is promised; and giving Us, as it were, a Possession of good Things that are remote, a present Possession of good Things that are future.

Ther. What are those Blessings, and these good Things?

Asp. I will inform my *Theron*; and in such a Manner, from such Passages, as shall farther ascertain my Representation of Faith.—What says the Apostle of the Gentiles? *I preached unto You the Gospel* ‡.—And what is the Substance of this evangelical Message? *CHRIST died for our Sins* §.—That so exalted a Person as the SON of GOD, and LORD of Glory, should *die*, is wonderful—That He should die for *Sins*, the most abominable Objects, and for Sinners, the most detestable Creatures, is abundantly more wonderful—That He should die, not for Sins in general, but for *our Sins* in particular, this is inexpressibly wonderful, and at the same Time inexpressibly comfortable—Here we have the Gospel and its capital Blessing, expressed in this Proposition, *CHRIST died for Sins*. Here We have Faith and its principal Acting, expressed in this Proposition, *CHRIST died for our Sins*.

* Ελεγχος.

† ὑποσας. Perhaps, the Reader may prefer Dr. Doddridge's Exposition of this Passage. Which, though somewhat different, is truly excellent. *Faith*, He says, is the confident Expectation of Things hoped for, upon the Security of the divine Promise. It is also the powerful Conviction of Things which are not seen, but of whose Certainty there is such a full Persuasion, that they act upon the Mind, as if they were present.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 1.

§ 1 Cor. xv. 3.

Sins. Till the former is preached, the Doctrine is not Gospel; till the latter is believed, it should seem from *St. Paul's Account*, the Conviction is not Faith.

Let me produce another Instance, extracted, like the preceding, from the Rolls of Heaven. *This is the Record, that GOD hath given to Us eternal Life**, not proposed it, on I know not what Conditions, but *hath given*. Freely and fully; without any Reserve; and with a Liberality suited to his incomprehensible Goodness, He hath given the richest of all Gifts: and not to some only, or to Others, but to *Us*, even to *Us*.

Ther. To *Us*, that is, to the Apostles and their Fellow-Saints. As the Epistle was written by an Apostle; it is certainly addressed to Men of like Mind; to *the Saints that are upon the Earth, and such as excel in Virtue*.

Asp. True: but was eternal Life given to them, because they were Apostles? No, verily; but because *CHRIST* died for them.—Did *CHRIST* die for them, because they excelled in Virtue? In no wise; but because they were miserable Sinners.—Eternal Life was purchased for them, when they were Sinners. It was consigned over to them, when they were Sinners. And neither the Purchase, nor the Gift, were founded on their *being* Saints, but aimed at *making* them so.

That *CHRIST* died for our Sins—That *GOD hath given to Us eternal Life*—These are the Blessings, of which Faith is the Evidence; these the good Things, of which Faith is the Substance. This is the Honey in the evangelical Hive: and I am at a loss to conceive, how it is possible to taste the Honey,

* 1 John v. 9.

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ney, without some Appropriation of the good Things to Ourselves.—This Appropriation, if I mistake not, is comprehended in the several figurative Descriptions of Faith, which occur in holy Writ.

Ther. Favour me with some of those Descriptions. I begin to see a peculiar Beauty, and an unequaled Richness, in the Figures of Scripture. Nothing yields me a more refined Pleasure, than to investigate and discover the exact Sense of those instructive Images. It is somewhat like kindling the consecrated Incense: which, when rising in a Flame, diffused Light; when spreading in Clouds of Fragrance, distributed Refreshment.

Asp. Faith is stiled, *A looking unto JESUS* *. But if We do not look unto JESUS, as the Propitiation for our Sins, what Comfort or what Benefit can We derive from the Sight?—*A Receiving of CHRIST* †. But can I have any Pretence to receive Him, and take Possession of his Merits, unless I am convinced, that they are offered or given to me? This is what neither the Dictates of Conscience will allow, nor the Laws of Reason authorize.—*A Resting upon CHRIST* ‡. But how can We

* Heb. xii. 2.

† John i. 12.

‡ I find two Words in the Original, which express the Privilege and the Duty of *resting on CHRIST*. □ which implies such a State of Acquiescence, as silences the Clamours of Conscience, and composes the Perturbation of the Spirit. מנוחה which signifies the Refreshment and *Repose* of a weary Pilgrim; when He arrives at the End of his Journey, and is settled for Life in a secure, commodious, plentiful Habitation. *Psal.* xxxvii. 7. *Isai.* xxviii. 12.—“It is not possible, says Mr. Bos-
“ton, to conceive a Soul *resting on CHRIST* for Salva-
“tion, without a Persuasion, that it shall have Life, and
“Salvation through Him.” And I may add, It is equally
VOL. III. C c impossible,

We rest on a Surety, if We have no Persuasion, that He has interposed on our Behalf? Or how confide in a Payment, which We believe to be made for others, not for ourselves?—Surely, *Theron*, when I rest upon an Object, I use it as *my* Support. When I receive a Gift, I take it as *my own* Property. And when the *Israelites* looked unto the brazen Serpent, they certainly regarded it as a Remedy, each particular Person for *Himself*.

Ther. To cast Ourselves upon *CHRIST* as an all-sufficient *SAVIOUR*; and rely on Him, for our whole Salvation; is not this real Faith? This is what I heard, sometime ago, from a celebrated Pulpit.

Asp. The Persuasion, that *CHRIST* is an all-sufficient *SAVIOUR*, is undoubtedly a Persuasion of what is true. But it is short of the Truth, for which I am pleading. Neither does it come up to the Faith, by which I am saved; unless I honour his declared Good-will, as well as his all-sufficient Power; and on the Authority of the former, regard the latter as my own.

You credit one Part of the Report, that *CHRIST* is a sufficient *SAVIOUR*, on the Testimony of *GOD* who cannot lie. Why should You not credit the same authentic Testifier *, when He repeatedly

impossible, without such a Persuasion, to enjoy the Acquiescence or obtain the Repose, hinted in the aforementioned Texts.

* The *LORD*, speaking by the Prophet *Isaiab*, seems to wonder, that any can doubt of his Will, after they have heard his Call. “*Wherefore when I came, was there no Man, and when I called was there none to answer?*” *Isai.* 1. 2. Sure it must be owing to some Suspicion of “*my Power to save.*” With respect to *my Willingness*, there

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edly declares, that this SAVIOUR, with all his Sufficiency, is really given to You? So given, that your most confident Appropriation cannot be disappointed.

This is what was taught, from the Pulpit of Infallibility; and by those first of Preachers, who spake as the HOLY GHOST gave them Utterance. Let the convinced Sinner, and the afflicted Soul, *trust in the Name of the LORD, and stay upon his GOD*. Let Him not only reverence CHRIST, as the incarnate GOD, and therefore mighty to save; but look upon CHRIST as *his* GOD, and thereby made Redemption to Him in particular. Thus let Him *lean upon* the ROCK * of Ages, without indulging a Doubt, concerning his Right to make use of it, or the Possibility of its failing him.

Ther. To cast ourselves upon CHRIST then, according to your Explanation, denotes an Application of his saving Merit to Ourselves.

Asp. To cast Ourselves upon CHRIST; to cast our Burden, or to cast all our Care † upon the LORD; are Metaphors, which may receive some Elucidation, from an Incident recorded in the Acts. When the Mariners and Passengers, which sailed with St. Paul, saw their Vessel shattered; saw the Waves prevailing; saw no Hope of Safety from continuing in the Ship; they cast themselves ‡ upon the floating Planks. They cast themselves upon the Planks

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“there can be no Room for Hesitation. My Call puts “this Matter beyond all reasonable Doubt.”—Therefore He proceeds, in the following Words, to give the most unquestionable Proofs of his Omnipotence. *Is my*

my Hand shortened, that it cannot redeem? &c.

* שׁוּׁן Isai. l. 10.

† Επιστηψατες, 1 Pet. v. 7.

‡ Απογενψατες, Acts xxvii. 43.

without any Scruple, not questioning their Right to make use of them; and they clave to those Supporters with a chearful Confidence *, not doubting but, according to the Apostle's Promise, they should escape safe to Land.—Be this what People mean, when they speak of *venturing* or *casting* themselves upon *CHRIST*, and I approve of the Expression, I subscribe the Doctrine †. It speaks what I wish for my Friend, for myself, and for my Fellow-sinners.

Let Us shift our Situation, and view the Point in another Light. Consider the blessed and glorious Object of our Faith.—*CHRIST* is represented by the Similitude of Bread, heavenly Bread, for the hungry Soul. Faith is characterized by *eating* the Food. Can this be done without a personal Application? —*CHRIST* is held forth under the Image of living Waters, ever running, and always free for the thirsty Appetite. But let them run ever so copiously,

* It is queried, Whether these People clave with a *cheerful Confidence*.—To which I answer. It is certain that, notwithstanding their frightful and perilous Situation, *they were all of good Cheer*. How they could, in *such* Circumstances, be *so* affected, without some Degree of Confidence in the Apostle's Declaration, is difficult to apprehend.—However, they made Use of the Planks, without any Demur as to the Matter of Right; and clave to them as confidently, as if they had been bought with their Money, and marked with their Name. And this is the Point principally intended; this is the Scope principally to be regarded. The Confidence of Appropriation, not the Assurance of Success, is the Thing to be illustrated.

† Such was the Doctrine, taught by that judicious Writer Mr. *Boston*. "This Blood is for *me*, says the Believer; for *my* Pardon, *my* Peace, *my* Sanctification. "And therefore I will *venture* my All upon it, for Time "and for Eternity."

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DIALOGUE XVII. 405

ously, let them be presented ever so freely, they will neither quench the Thirst, nor refresh the Spirits, unless they are *drank* *. To do this is the Business of Faith.—*CHRIST* is described as a Garment, to clothe the Naked, and beautify the Deformed. Faith is expressed, by *putting on* this commodious Garment, and wearing this beautiful Robe. Can any Idea, or any Expression, more strongly denote an actual Appropriation?

Ther. It is evident, that many holy People in former Ages, were not possessed of Assurance.—What is the Language of *David*? It is all Despondency. *I am cast out of the Sight of thine Eyes.*—To the same melancholy Tune is the Harp of *Asaph* strung. *Is his Mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his Promise fail for evermore?*—The same jealous and distrustful Air breathes in the Complaint of the Church. *The LORD hath forsaken me, and my LORD hath forgotten me.*—Why then should *Asaph* set up a Rule, which was too high to be reached, and too strict to be observed, even by those eminent Saints?

C c 3

Asp.

* Thus the Church of *England* explains those mysterious Expressions, *Who eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood.* In the Rubrick for administering the Sacrament to the Sick, She makes this public Declaration; “If He do stedfastly believe, that *JESUS CHRIST* hath suffered Death upon the Cross for *Him*, and shed his Blood for *his* Redemption, earnestly remembering the Benefits *He* hath thereby, He doth eat and drink the Body and Blood of our *SAVIOUR CHRIST*, profitably to his Soul’s Health.”—This should be of some Weight; at least, with the Members of our Church. For my own Part, I give my Assent and Consent most readily and unfeignedly. Neither can I see, how it is possible to feed on the heavenly Manna, any other Way.

406 D I A L O G U E XVII.

Asp. You should rather ask ; Why have the best Judges, and the most exemplary Christians, in their several Writings, set up this Rule ? Why have the Apostles of our LORD, and the SPIRIT of our GOD, speaking in the Bible, set up this Rule ?—To which I might reply ; Because it is, of all Precepts, the most beneficial. Therefore, they have not so much set it up, under the Notion of a strict Rule ; as they have set it forth, under the Character of an open Door for the chief of Sinners.

Your Complaint, when put into its proper Language, seems to run thus ; “ Why must We be “ obliged to proceed upon GOD’s bare Word ? Why “ must We be obliged to trust in *CHRIST* alone, “ or to *assure* Ourselves of Salvation by HIM ? ” Whereas, instead of a Complaint, it should be Matter of Exultation. We should rather express Ourselves in this Manner ; “ Bless the LORD, “ O my Soul ; that I—a Sinner, a vile Sinner, should “ be allowed to take *CHRIST*, and all his Salva- “ tion, as my own ; and thus to assure myself of “ Pardon, Holiness, and Glory.”

This Blessing was certainly enjoyed by the holy Men of old. But like every other Species of Felicity in this World, it was enjoyed after an imperfect Manner.—They had an assured Persuasion of GOD’s present Favour, and of their own final Happiness. Nevertheless, this assured Persuasion was liable to the Assaults, both of outward Temptations, and of inward Corruptions. Which might, for a While, impair its Vigour, or eclipse its Lustre, though not destroy its Being. As, under a transient Swoon, the Spirits fail, the Colour departs, but the vital Principle subsists.

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You may farther observe, concerning those pious Persons, that, when they cease to exercise this Confidence of Faith, they lament the Failure; *I said, this is my Infirmary* *.—They chide themselves for it; *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul?*—They encourage themselves against it; *Hope in GOD* †, it is thy unquestionable Privilege.—How could they do this? On what Grounds, or from what Motive? If they had no Persuasion, that their Ransom was paid, and their GOD reconciled. Consequently, that all their Doubts were an Injury to his Fidelity and to his Goodness.

Nay, the Church, even under her darkest Apprehensions, still speaks the Sentiment, still retains the Grace, for which I am pleading. *My LORD*, uttered with her Lips, argues an *applicatory* Faith in her Heart.—So copious and pregnant are the Evidences of this precious Doctrine! It is confirmed by that very Passage, which was produced for its Confutation.

Ther. If this be the Sentiment of the Church in general, is it also the Temper of her particular Members? Was each of them animated by this firm and lively Faith?

Ans. Let these particular Persons appear, and answer for themselves.—Hear the Declaration of the Psalmist; *Bless the LORD, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name* ‡. What is the Cause of this holy Transport, and devout Praise? Is it, because GOD possibly may, because He probably will? No; but because HE actually does forgive: *Who forgiveth all thine Iniquities*.—Take notice of Job's Belief, and Job's Support, amidst his un-

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exampled

* Psal. lxxvii. 10. † Psal. xlii. 5. ‡ Psal. ciii. 1, 4

exemplified Sufferings. *I know that my REDEEMER liveth*; not only that there is a Redeemer, but that He is, together with all his saving Benefits, *mine*. Which being a Truth so sweet and delightful, is expressed a second Time; *whom I shall see for myself**, to my own Advantage, and for my own Comfort. I shall see him exerting his almighty Power and infinite Mercy, to rescue my Body from the Grave, and to deliver my Soul from Hell.—What was *Habakkuk's* Security, amidst the threatening, the tremendous, the triumphant Malice of his own, and his Country's Enemies? *The LORD GOD is my Strength*. He says not, *I wish, I pray*, for the divine Favour, and the divine Succour; but I am persuaded, they both are mine; my inestimable Portion, and my inviolable Safeguard. *He will make my Feet like Hind's Feet*, so that I shall escape from all Danger; and *He will make me walk upon mine high Places*, beyond the Reach of every Evil †.

Ther. Is this the Language of Believers under the New Testament Dispensation?

Asp. Under every Dispensation, *Theron*.—They who lived before the Law, *were persuaded ‡ of the Promises*; had not the least Distrust with regard to the Certainty of their Performance. Nay; they *embraced them* || as their own; they received them with a particular Application; and hugged them, as it were, to their very Souls.—They who lived under the Law could say; *As far as the East is from the West, so far hath He removed our Transgressions from Us §*.—Our Transgressions; He *hath* removed; from Us. This is the Acknowledgment, not of *David* alone,

* Job xix. 25, 27. † Hab. iii. 19. ‡ Πισθόματες, Heb. xi. 13. || Απαλαμπνοί. § Psal. ciii. 12.

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alone, but of the *Jewish Church*. Every true *Israelite* either made it, or was authorized and exhorted to make it.—And can You imagine, that, in the Days of the Gospel, when our Advantages are greater and our Light is clearer, our Faith should be weaker? *St. Peter* makes a Profession, which excludes all Doubting; *I am a Witness of the Sufferings of CHRIST, and also a Partaker of the Glory that shall be revealed**. *St. Paul* answers in the same heroic Strain; *I am persuaded that neither Life, nor Death, nor any Creature, shall be able to separate me from the Love of GOD, which is in CHRIST JESUS my LORD†*. With both which, the Confession of Faith recorded by *St. Luke*, is exactly correspondent; *We believe that, through the Grace of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, We shall be saved even as They‡*.

Ther. Was not this a Privilege peculiar to the Apostles?

Asp. By no means. All Believers are Brethren, and have like precious Faith.—*St. Paul* congratulates Himself and the Christians at *Ephesus*, with these delightful Words; *In whom We have Redemption, through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins*. Forgiveness He mentions, not as a Blessing proposed for their Acquisition, but as consigned over to their Enjoyment. What was imparted to their Souls, and manifested in

* 1 Pet. v. 1.

† Rom. viii. 29.

‡ *Acts* xv. 11. This, We may observe, is the Apostle's Explanation of Faith; of that Faith, which the Gentiles exercised. It is a Belief, that We are, that We shall be, saved. Both these Ideas are comprehended in the original, σωθησιν. We are saved, by Purchase; shall be saved, by Power. Are saved inchoatively; shall be saved eternally.

410 DIALOGUE XVII.

in their Consciences. Their present Portion, as well as their future Plea.—St. *Peter* exhorts all his Converts, dispersed in various Parts of the World; *Gird up the Lions of your Mind, and hope to the End*; or, as the Word should rather be translated, hope perfectly, hope assuredly, *for the Grace that is to be brought unto You at the Revelation of JESUS CHRIST**. Maintain, not a dim, but a bright Hope; not a wavering, but a steady Expectation, of eternal Life. That free, but grand Gift, of which the LORD JESUS, at his second Coming, will certainly make you Partakers.—The Apostle, writing to his Hebrew Converts, encourages them all to *hold fast the Confidence*—

Ther. Confidence! This is a strong and bold Word. It has sometimes given me a little Disgust. But recollecting, that it is scriptural, I made no Objection. However, I would gladly know, to what it refers.

Asp. To their final and everlasting Salvation. It is explained by the sacred Writer Himself. *Knowing, that Ye have in Heaven, a better and a more enduring Substance.* This is the Confidence, which they are excited to hold fast.—He adds, *and the Rejoicing of Hope, firm unto the End†*. Whence it appears, that a Hope amounting to Confidence, and the Joy which naturally results from such a Hope, were the common Portion of Christians; possessed,

* 1 Pet. i. 13. *Εἰς τέλος* or *μέχρι τέλους*, signify *To the End*. But *τελευτος*, as far as I can recollect, is never used in this Sense, either by sacred or profane Writers. It may be rendered *perfectè, integrè*, in this Connection, *cum firmâ Fiduciâ*, with a firm Affiance.

† Heb. iii. 6.

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DIALOGUE XVII. 411

not barely by some few exalted Saints, but by the Followers of *JESUS* in general.—I might bring many more Instances. But why should I multiply Proofs? Since the beloved Disciple declares; *These Things have I written unto You, that believe on the Name of the SON of GOD, that Ye may know that Ye have eternal Life* *.

Ther. True, Aspasio. This coincides with my Apprehensions. The Scriptures were written—first, that We may *believe*, and be entitled to eternal Life—next, that We may have the *Knowledge* of our Belief, and a Consciousness of our Title. The Apostle supposes his Correspondents to possess the former, yet not to have attained the latter.

Asp. Is it certain, that He makes such a Supposition? He writes, I imagine, not with a View of leading them to either, but of *confirming* them in both.—He intimates, that the Privilege and the Comfort should go together. If We believe, that *CHRIST* is our Surety; We would be persuaded, that He has paid our Debt, and satisfied Justice to the very uttermost Farthing. If We believe, that *CHRIST* is our Bridegroom; We should rest assured, that his Righteousness, his Inheritance, and his Kingdom are ours. And why should We take Pains to separate, what *GOD's* Word and the very Nature of Things have united? Will this turn to our Advantage? Must it not issue in our Loss?—Besides, according to your own Interpretation, whoever falls short of this chearing Knowledge, falls short of *one* great End for which the Scriptures were written. He receives not his full Reward. He only gleans, where He might reap.
Or

* 1 John v. 13.

412 DIALOGUE XVII.

Or rather, He is tossed on the Ocean: whereas, *they that believe*, have gained the Port; have dropped their Anchor; and *enter into Rest* *.

Ther. Believed! What? That our Sins are laid upon *CHRIST*? That He was obedient in our Stead? That all spiritual Blessings are thereby procured for *our*—even for *our* Enjoyment? Is this the Faith, which the Apostle means?

Assp. The Blessings You have enumerated, are the Sum and Substance of the Gospel. And I know of no other justifying Faith, but that which relates to the Gospel, and believes its Report †. Nor can I think, that any other Belief will administer the Tranquility, or produce the Rest, specified by the Apostle.—But why this insignificant Expression, *I think*? Hear a better Judge, and a more authentic Witness. Hear what a celebrated Divine and an admired Poet says, upon the Subject. Who has very happily stated the true Nature of Faith; that great Duty, and great Privilege, of the Gospel!

*O! for a firm, a lasting Faith,
To credit what the Almighty saith!
To embrace the Promise of his Son,
And call the Joys of Heaven our own!*

Our own! If We omit this Circumstance, how poor and mean a Thing is Faith! Unworthy to be distinguished, as the leading Doctrine of the whole Bible. Scarce worthy of a single Wish from any One, or of another Word from Us.—If We do not comprise *this* in our Faith, what do We more than apostate Spirits? They are persuaded, that *CHRIST* and his Benefits are bestowed on the

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* Heb. iv. 3.

† Isai. liii. 1.

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Elect, on the Converted, on Believers. But they cannot believe, that GOD gives *CHRIST* and all spiritual Benefits to them. They have no Ground for calling these Blessings *their own*.

Here, I find, lies the Core and Root of our Controversy. This is the precise Point to be settled; What it is to *believe*? What is included in this very important Word?—This Question might renew our Dispute, and cause the past Arguments to recur. Whereas, I would gladly get rid of Disputation. We have already been too long detained in these disagreeable Paths. However, since You have given the Occasion, let me avail myself of another Text or two. For I would willingly drive this Nail to the Head; and not leave my Friend unconvinced, on a Subject of the utmost Consequence.

The LORD declares by his Prophet, *I, even I am He, that blotteth out thy Transgressions*. To believe, is to subscribe this Declaration; to subscribe with our Hand, and profess from our Heart, "LORD it is done, as Thou hast said."—Faith is, if I may so speak, the Echo of the divine Voice. It eagerly catches, and punctually reverberates the joyful Sound. Does GOD say, *Thou art my People*? Faith replies, *Thou art my GOD*: not barely desiring, but confidently averring, an Interest in his Favour. This Explanation of Faith, is given Us by a Wisdom, which cannot be deceived; by a Fidelity, which cannot deceive*.—Once more.

Our

* *Hos. ii. 23*. It may not be impertinent, and it will be very comfortable to observe; That this Passage respects, not a virtuous and obedient, but a wicked and rebellious People. GOD commands even *them*, who had hitherto walked altogether in sinful Courses, to call Him *their Father*, in the very first Step of their Return.

414 DIALOGUE XVII.

Our LORD bears this Testimony concerning *Thomas*; *Thomas, thou hast believed.* Now then, I think, We have an infallible Touchstone. Provided We can discover, what that is, which *JESUS CHRIST* calls *Believing*. Whatever it be, it is the Determination of Truth itself; and should pass for a Verdict, from which there lies no Appeal. And this, this is the Confession, which *Thomas* made, and to which *CHRIST* refers; *My LORD, and my GOD* *. This, this expresses, what our Divine MASTER calls *Believing*. When, therefore, We confess with our Lips, and are persuaded in our Hearts, that *JESUS* is *our LORD*, who bought Us with his Blood; that *JESUS* is *our GOD*, who will exert all his adorable Perfections for our Good; then We truly believe. We believe, in our SAVIOUR's Sense of the Word. We have that Faith, which *He* allows to be genuine.

Ther. Is this the *constant* Language of Faith?—According to this Account, there is no Difference between the Infant and the Adult; between the newborn Babe, and the full-grown Man in *CHRIST*. Your spiritual Children, *Aspasio*, must be Men from their Birth; nay, born in all the Vigour of Manhood. Whereas, the Apostle makes an evident Difference between the *Babes*, the *young Men*, and the *Fathers*; between Faith, the Assurance of Faith, and the full Assurance of Faith. If We are told of a Patriarch, who was *strong in Faith*; We read of some Roman Converts, who were *weak in the Faith*; and We hear our LORD speaking to Disciples, who were *fearful and of little Faith*.

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* John xx. 28, 29.

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Assp. Between Faith, and the *full Assurance* of Faith, the Apostle makes a Difference. The one is the most exalted Pitch, where the other is but an inferior Elevation. Yet both are Rounds of the same Ladder. I don't remember, that the sacred Writer any where distinguishes between Faith and Assurance. ΠΙΣΤΙς and Περσποθης, *Faith* and *Confidence*, are joined in the Epistle to the *Ephesians*. It is the Opinion of the best Critics, that the Sense of the latter is included in the former. The Critic's Opinion is confirmed by the Apostle's Manner of speaking, *We have Access with Confidence through Faith* *. Could yonder Sun diffuse Warmth through the Air, if it had no Warmth in itself? Impossible! No more could Faith produce Confidence in the Believer, if, in its own Nature, it did not contain the same.

The Case of *little Faith*, I think, may be explained from our LORD's own Expostulation; *O Thou of little Faith, wherefore didst Thou doubt?* Here was a Faith, not only in *CHRIST*'s Power, but also in his Will. Nay; here was an appropriating Faith, by which the Apostle applied both to himself.—“ I verily believe, that my Divine MASTER is *able* to preserve me, even though I venture to tread upon this tempestuous Sea. I am persuaded likewise, that He *will* uphold me, and not suffer his Servant to perish in the hazardous Enterprize.” Nothing less than this could have produced that hazardous Enterprize, or have emboldened Him to walk upon the rolling Billows.

Do You not discern, in this Instance, some Degree of personal Application, some real Assurance of Faith? 'Tis true, this Faith was violently assaulted

* Eph. iii. 12.

faulted by Doubts, and greatly infeeble by Fears *, yet still, it was of the applicatory Kind. *He can, He will*, were expressive of its Nature; though the boisterous Winds, and the terrifying Appearance of Things, almost drowned its Voice, or stifled the Words in their Utterance.

Ther. If You allow no Difference between Faith and Confidence, I am very sure, St. *John* puts a Difference between *Babes, young Men, and Fathers*.

Asp. He does, *Theron*. And so would I. Neither can I think of any Thing more proper to explain my Meaning, or establish my Tenet, than your own Comparison.—In some fruitful Family, You may see one Child in Leading-Strings; another able to walk by itself; a third come home, improved and cultivated, from the School of Literature. Observe their Speech. One lisps out a few broken Sentences; another talks intelligibly, but very incorrectly; the last has learned to express Himself with tolerable Propriety. Yet each speaks
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* I must beg of the candid Reader, to take particular Notice of this Limitation; and must intreat the impartial Examiner, not to forget this Concession. We nowhere suppose, that a Freedom from all Fears, and a Superiority to all Doubts, are essential to the Believer, or form his invariable Character. We speak of Faith considered *in itself*; and only affirm, that an appropriating Persuasion, or an Assurance of Salvation by *CHRIST*, is its true, genuine, adequate Nature. That which properly answers to the divine Report, and to the divine Grant of a SAVIOUR. That which properly takes hold of, and depends upon, the Faithfulness of *GOD*, pledged in his Word.—This Assurance, We allow, may be encumbered with Doubts, and may conflict with Fears. But still it is *Assurance—real Assurance*—and *proves* itself to be such, by opposing and struggling with the contrary Principle.

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VOL. III

DIALOGUE XVII. 417

the *same* Language, notwithstanding the various Degrees of Fluency in their Utterance, or Purity in their Diction.—So Faith always speaks one and the same uniform Language. Whether she lisps or stammers ; whether She whispers in faint Accents, or raises her Voice in a more manly Tone ; this is still the unvaried Import of her Speech ; *GOD, even our own GOD, will give Us his Blessing.*—Can You forget, how St. *John* addresses even his little Children ? *I write unto You, little Children, because your Sins ARE FORGIVEN **.

Ther. Will not this Account discourage some, and offend others, whose Experience comes short of any such Persuasion ?

Asp. I would not offend the meanest, nor discourage the weakest of my REDEEMER's Servants.—As for *Offence* ; that cannot be given, and ought not to be taken, when all we advance is strictly conformable to the unerring Oracles. Whereas, to qualify and attenuate the scriptural Descriptions of Faith, in Complaisance to our own Experience—to make the unhappy Fluctuations and unworthy Suspicions, which possess the Breasts of some particular Christians—to make them the Rule of explaining, or the Measure of enforcing so capital a Duty ; this, sure, would be an Offence to GOD, an Injury to his Word, and detrimental to the Welfare of Souls.

With regard to *Discouragement* ; I cannot conceive, how this should ensue, from informing Sinners, that they have a Right to apply *CHRIST*, and all *CHRIST*'s Merits to themselves : or from exhorting Sinners to do this, without any
VOL. III. D d Hesitation,

* 1 John ii. 12.

Hesitation, and with a resolute Dependence. In this Case, to *doubt* is to be discouraged. As much as You want Certainty, so much You want Consolation. The proper Way to comfort these distressed People, is, not to allow but to dissipate their Doubts; to blow away those dead Ashes, that the smothered Embers may shine and glow.

Were We to inquire after the Cause of that Disquietude and Despondency, which are so common among *modern* Professors, I am inclined to suspect, We should find it lying hid in their wrong Apprehensions both of *CHRIST*, and of Faith. — They look upon *CHRIST*, as a rigorous and forbidding Monarch, who insists upon some hard Terms and high Qualifications. Whereas, his Heart and his Arms are ever open. His Heart as open, as infinite Love can set it; his Arms as open, as infinite Merit can make them. — They look upon Faith, as containing a Possibility only, or at most a Probability of Salvation through his Name. It is with them a Kind of *Peradventure*. A Situation of Mind, fluctuating and pendulous. “Perhaps, I “ may succeed, and be eternally blessed. Perhaps, “ I may be rejected, and eternally ruined.” Such a State of Suspense, in an Affair of everlasting Consequence, cannot but create Uneasiness and Anxiety.

This Uneasiness and Anxiety seem to have been little known in the earlier and better Days of the Church. And why? Because Christians were then exposed to the Rage of Persecution? Because they were placed nearer the Time of *CHRIST*’s personal Abode on Earth? I rather think, because they were taught this particular and comfortable Application

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DIALOGUE XVII. 419

Application of *CHRIST* and his Righteousness. They exercised a confident Affiance on *JESUS*, as *their own REDEEMER*; and were shewn a more direct Way to obtain this blessed Confidence, than merely to search after their own renewed Qualities.

Ther. Surely, *Aspasio*, in this Particular You differ, not from me only, but from the Generality of the *Orthodox*.

Asp. I am sorry to find myself under a Necessity of differing from any worthy Persons, much more of disagreeing with the Generality. This I can safely aver, that it is not from an Affectation of Novelty, or any Fondness for Disputing, but from a disinterested Regard to the Truth of the Gospel. I should be glad to have the Concurrence of all the Serious, and all the Pious. But I dare not purchase their Approbation, I dare not attempt a Coalition of Sentiments, by diminishing the boundless Riches of Grace, or restricting the absolute Freedom of Salvation by *CHRIST*.

You are pleased to remind me of the *Orthodox*. Pray, my dear Friend, what is the Standard of Orthodoxy?—Is it the Word of Revelation? This speaks once, yea twice, nay some Hundreds of Times in our Favour.—Is it the Doctrine of our Reformers from Popery? With these We jar not, but exactly harmonize.—Is it to be taken from the old Confessions of Faith, and the Catechisms of protestant Churches? To these We appeal, and have the Sanction of their Authority.—Has the *modern* Way of treating and stating this momentous Subject so much to alledge for its Support?

420 DIALOGUE XVII.

Let me farther ask—Are *We* better than our Fathers? Is Christianity in a thriving Condition, or practical Religion on the advancing Hand? The Reverse, the melancholy Reverse is undeniably true.—When our Writers enforced, and our Preachers urged, what I am defending, Professors were alive, and animated with the Power of Godliness. Whereas, now *We* seem to be degenerated into the mere Form. *We have a Name to live, but are* languid, listless, and if not *dead* *, yet ready to die.—It behoves *Us* therefore to consider, whether the Declension, the Decays, the Unfruitfulness, so justly lamented in the present Age, may not be owing to the Absence of this appropriating Belief, of this assured Persuasion.

A sweet Assurance of Pardon, a comfortable Persuasion of our Reconciliation with GOD, an established Hope of eternal Glory through *JESUS CHRIST*; these will be operative in the Soul, as “a Torch in the Sheaf.” These will inkindle Love, and increase Watchfulness; these will beget the true Humility of Mind, and work an unfeigned Abhorrence of Sin; these will enlarge the Heart with Charity, and exalt the Affections above the World. These are the proper, and the only effectual Means of making the *Man of GOD* perfect, that is, *thoroughly furnished to every good Work* †.

* Rev. iii. 1.

† For the Display and Confirmation of these Points, I do, with great Pleasure, and without any Diffidence, refer to Mr. MARSHAL's *Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*. Which I shall not recommend in the Style of a Critic, nor like a Reader of Taste, but with all the Simplicity of the weakest Christian; I mean, from my own Experience.

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But the doubting Frame is not fitted to yield any of these Fruits. Nay, I am apprehensive, there are several Graces, which can hardly be exercised, several Duties, which can scarcely be performed, so long as this Spirit of Diffidence prevails.

Ther. Name them, *Aspasio*.

Asp. I am afraid, lest I should seem to arrogate the Office of a Teacher; which neither becomes my Condition, nor is agreeable to my Temper.

Ther. I beseech You, my dear Friend, let Us wave Ceremony, and have nothing to do with Compliments. My Soul is in jeopardy. My present Comfort, and my everlasting Happiness, are at stake. And shall We suffer any little Punctilios to overbear such weighty Considerations?

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Suppose,

rience. To me it has been made singularly instructive, comfortable, useful. Though I have often read it, I am never weary of reading it. And every fresh Perusal, still gives me fresh Improvement, Consolation, and spiritual Strength. Inasmuch, that was I to be banished into some desolate Island, possessed only of two Books besides my BIBLE, this should be one of the two; perhaps, the first that I would choose.

Should any Person, hitherto a Stranger to the Work, purchase it on this Recommendation, I must desire to suggest one Caution—That He be not surpris'd, if, in the Beginning, He meets with something new, and quite out of the common Road. Or, if surpris'd, that He would not be offended, but calmly and attentively proceed. He will find the Author's Design opening itself by degrees. He will discern more and more the Propriety of his Method. And what might, at the first View appear like a Stumbling-block; will prove to be a fair compendious, ample Avenue—to the Palace of Truth—to the Temple of Holiness—and to the Bowers of Happiness.

Suppose, You are a Teacher ; I have great Need, and am very desirous, to become your Scholar. For I freely confess, that, knowing as I may seem in other Instances, I am very ignorant in the great Peculiarities of the Gospel. And a Heathen would reproach me, if I should choose to continue in Ignorance, rather than submit to Information.

*Cur nescire, prudens pravè, quam discere malle ** ?

Nay ; though I have read the Scriptures in a critical View, I have been an utter Stranger to their spiritual Meaning. Here, I am uninstructed as a Babe ; here, therefore, I ought to be teachable as a Babe. Yes ; in this respect I would become as a little Child, that I may enter into the Knowledge, and possess the Privileges of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Asp. Your Answer, *Theron*, shall be a Law.—*Love to GOD*, is the first Commandment ; and without all Peradventure, is the principal Grace. But, is it easy, is it possible to love *GOD*, before We have any Persuasion of his Love to Us ? This is what the Apostles did not, could not do. And, if it exceeded *their* Ability, it will doubtless be above the Reach of *our* Capacity. The Thing may be attempted ; the Practice may be urged. We may see the Necessity of it, and desire to perform it. But we shall never, never be able to exercise it, till We have some comfortable Apprehension of *GOD's* Reconciliation and good Will to Us. *We love HIM*—Wherefore ? From what Inducement ? *Because HE first loved Us* † ; and because this Love hath been made evident to our Consciences, by the Light of Faith.

What

* *HOR.*

† 1 John iv. 10.

DIALOGUE XVII. 423

What think You of *Delight in GOD*? This also is a christian Grace; of eminent Distinction, and unspeakable Value. But *how can Two walk together, except they be agreed*? We never covet an Intimacy with the Person, who declares Himself our Enemy. Nay, if there be only a Suspicion, that He bears Us a secret ill Will, We shall be jealous of trusting Him, and averse to approach Him. This was the Case of our first Parents, immediately after the Fall. Instead of drawing near to their CREATOR, with Pleasure and Gratitude; they fled from Him, with Anxiety and Terror. And why? Because they were under the alarming Apprehensions of his Displeasure.—Whereas, let Us once believe, what the Apostle affirms; *When We were Enemies, We were reconciled to GOD by the Death of his SON**. Let Us cordially credit, what the Prophet repeatedly declares; *Therefore will the LORD wait that He may be gracious unto You; and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have Mercy upon You* †. Then We shall seek his

D d 4

Face

* Rom. v. 10.

† *Isai. xxx. 18.* That admirable Commentator V-TRINGA, who generally draws his Bow with a steady Hand, and shoots his Arrow with the exactest Aim, Here seems to have missed the Mark. *Waiting to be gracious*, according to his Interpretation, implies a *Delay* in the Exercise of the Attribute, and is the same as to *abstain from being gracious*. Had this been the Meaning, the Language would probably have been, not *לְהִיטָב* but *מְחַנְנֵם*

Waiting to be gracious rather signifies, to stand over a People with the continued Tenders of Grace and Mercy, even while they refuse to accept them. This was the Case with GOD and *Israel*. GOD promised to defend the *Israelites*; they obstinately refused to confide in

424 DIALOGUE XVII.

Face with Alacrity. Our Affections will be on the Wing to salute their Almighty BENEFAC-
TOR. We shall *joy in GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.*

Ther. To the Enjoyment of many spiritual Con-
solations, and the Exercise of several delightful
Graces, I acknowlege, an assured Faith is neces-
sary; but—

Asp. Ay, Theron, You may well hesitate. It will
be difficult to fill up the Chasm in your Discourse.
For my part, I know not any Duty of Holiness,
which can be performed aright, without some De-
gree of this confiding Faith.—We are to *walk wor-
thy of HIM, who hath called Us to his Kingdom and
Glory**: but if we doubt, whether We in particular
are called, how can this influence our Conversation?
—We are to be *Followers of GOD, as his dear
Children* †. But if We do not, cannot, will not be-
lieve, so as to cry “Abba, FATHER,” how can
such a Consideration sway our Hearts?—Nay; upon
what Principles can such a Person address Himself
to

in his Protection. GOD dissuaded them from trusting
in the Succour of *Egypt*; they presumptuously resolved
to rely on that broken Reed. *Therefore, says GOD, I will*—withdraw my slighted Mercy; deny my despised
Assistance;—This would be the Manner of human Pro-
cedure. But the LORD’s Ways are not as Man’s Ways.
His Long-suffering triumphs over our Perverseness.
Therefore, He says, “I will not deal with them accord-
ing to their Folly. I will not turn away from them
in Displeasure. I will even wait for them, and wait
upon them, till they see their Error, and accept my
Favour.”—Amazing Condescension and Goodness! I
was going to say. But *divine* Condescension and Good-
ness are, if I may so speak, infinitely more than amazing.

* 1 Theff. ii. 12.

† Eph. v. 1.

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DIALOGUE XVII. 425

to discharge any Office of the *christian* Life? We are to *abound in the Works of the LORD*, from the animating Prospect of a glorious Resurrection *. This He cannot do; because He apprehends Himself to have no Lot or Portion in the blessed Hope. —We are to open our Hands in Charity to others, under a View of that heavenly Kingdom, which was prepared for Us before the Foundation of the World †: We are to cleanse Ourselves from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, on account of those precious Promises, which are freely given to us in *CHRIST JESUS* ‡: but where unbelieving Doubts predominate, these endearing and invigorating Motives are lost. The Man has no Interest in the encouraging Promises, has no Title to the blissful Inheritance; consequently, these Sinews of evangelical Obedience, with respect to him, are benumbed, withered, dead.

Once again; A true Christian, instead of dreading, *loves* the Day of *CHRIST*'s final and glorious Appearing. *St. Peter* tells Us, He *looks for it*, with pleasing Expectation, as *Sisera's* Mother for the triumphant Return of her Son. He *hastens to it*, in ardent Desire, as the enamoured Bridegroom to the wish'd-for Hour of his Nuptials. Which, I think, can neither be a rational nor a practicable Thing, unless We have some chearing and established Hope, that, *when He shall appear, We shall be like Him, and see Him as He is.*

Ther. Such a Man may make Prayers and Supplications. Though he cannot rejoice in the Privileges,

* 1 Cor. xv. 58. † Matt. xxv. 34. ‡ 2 Cor. vii. 1.

426 DIALOGUE XVII.

vileges, He may request them at the Throne of Grace.

Ass. Prayer is a great Duty, and as great a Privilege. I wish my dear *Theron* the Spirit of Grace and Supplication. This will be better, incomparably better and more advantageous, than a Key to hidden Treasures. But how can You pray with humble Boldness, or with lively Hope, unless You believe? Believe, that *CHRIST* is your High-Priest; is your Intercessor with the *FATHER*; and, with all the Incense of his infinite Merit, presents your Petitions? Then, and then only, can You have, what the Apostle calls, *Boldness and Access with Confidence* *. Take notice of these vigorous Expressions; and at your Leisure consider, whether they countenance the suspicious and misgiving Temper.—At present observe, how yonder Lark warbles and mounts in the Firmament; as if she

was

* *Eph. iii. 12.* *Προσάωψιν*, *Access with a chearing and graceful Assurance*; such as those Petitioners enjoy, who are introduced to the royal Presence by some distinguished Favourite.—As when *Joseph's* Brethren were presented to *Pharaoh*, by the Prime Minister of *Egypt*, and Deliverer of the Nation. *Gen. xlvii. 2.* *Παρρησία*, *A Boldness or unrestrained Liberty of Speech*; such as Children use, when they present their Addresses, and make known their Requests, to an indulgent Father.—As when *Achish*, a beloved Daughter, solicited her Suit at the Hand of *Caleb*, her generous Parent. *Judg. i. 15.* *Ἐν ἐννοσίῳ*, *With a well-grounded and steady Confidence*, that We shall obtain both a favourable Acceptance, and a gracious Answer.—As when *Esther*, made her Petition to a Sovereign, who had stretched out the golden Sceptre, and promised to grant whatever She asked. *Esther v. 6.* And all this, through the Faith of *CHRIST*; through the Worthiness of his Person, and Prevalence of his Intercession, which have more Weight and Influence in Heaven, than all Arguments, Motives, or Considerations, whatever,

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was bidding Adieu to the Earth, and going to mingle with the Skies. An Image *this*, of believing Prayer! Should a Fowler shoot the soaring Songster through the Wing, how would she fall from her Elevation, and flutter on the Ground! An Emblem *that*, of distrusting Prayer.

I know not how to leave this Subject, without attending to the Testimony of St. James: than which, nothing can be more awful, and nothing more decisive. It should really alarm the doubting Disposition, as much as any Solicitation to the most horrid Sin. It should alarm the whole religious World, as much as the Beacons, suddenly kindled and all on a Flame, would alarm the Inhabitants of the maritime Coasts. *Let Him pray in Faith, nothing doubting* *; for *He that doubteth is like a Wave of the Sea, driven by the Wind, and tost*. Nay; the Apostle adds—and it is an Addition greatly to be regarded. It should abide with Weight on our Consciences. For it comes from a Casuist, who could neither be too indulgent, through an Excess of Compassion; nor too rigorous, through an Extravagance of Zeal—*let not that Man, the doubting Suppliant think, that He shall receive any Thing of the LORD*.

Never

* *Jam. i. 6. N. B. Nothing doubting*, is the Apostle's Explanation of *Faith*.—An Explanation, which He learned from the Lips of his divine MASTER. See *Matt. xxi. 21.*—*Μηδὲ διακινεῖσθαι* is, in our Translation, *nothing wavering*. But the very same Expression is rendered, *Acts x. 20. Nothing doubting*. The Sense is, either Way, alike. Though, I think, *Nothing wavering*, corresponds too nearly with the Comparison, *Like a Wave*; makes something of a disagreeable Jingle; and flattens the Force, or supercedes the Necessity, of the following Illustration.

428 D I A L O G U E XVII.

Never then, my worthy Friend, never more be an Advocate for Doubtings. Pursue them with Fire and Sword. Give them no Quarter. Deal with them as *Saul* was commanded to treat the *Amalekites*.

Ther. Do You then assert, that None can be a true Believer, or find Acceptance with GOD, if He be liable to any Doubts?

Asp. Far be the Thought from my Heart, farther still the Assertion from my Lips.—That there is no Doubting in Faith I aver; and so does common Sense; and so will every thinking Person. To receive *CHRIST*, and doubt of it, is impossible. To believe, that GOD hath given to Us eternal Life, and at the same Time to doubt of it, is self-contradictory. In short; to doubt of what We believe, is utterly inconsistent.—Yet, though there is no Doubting in true Faith, there may be many Doubts in the true Believer. Because, He does not always exercise his Faith, and never is perfect in his Faith. He knows and enjoys, only in Part.

So far from asserting, what You suggest, that I verily think, there is not a Believer on Earth, whose Faith is wholly free from Intervals of Failure, or from the Assaults of Doubting. Corruption, inbred Corruption, fixes its cancrous Tooth in this, as well as in every other Gift of Grace. The most advanced Saint, who can steadily say, *L O R D, I believe*; has Reason to add, *Help Thou mine Unbelief!*—This however I maintain, that all Kinds and every Degree of Doubting, are no less sinful, than they are prejudicial. They are what the Gospel cen-
fures,

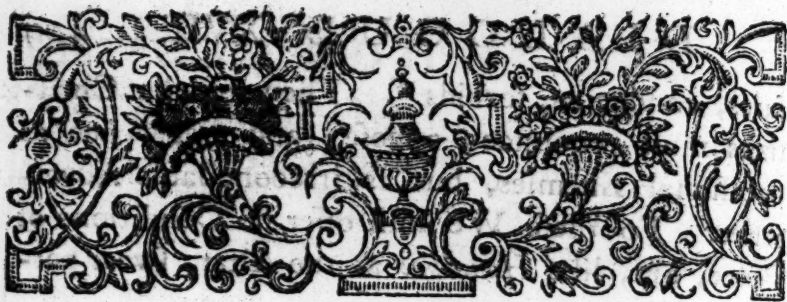
DIALOGUE XVII. 429

fures, condemns, forbids *. They are what Christians must renounce; oppose; and treat, not as occasional Enemies, but as irreconcilable Adversaries. To these We must offer no Conditions of Peace, but, like *Hannibal* at the Altar, swear perpetual War.

Methinks, I would borrow the fine figurative Language of the Church: which, if it has not a direct Reference to this Subject, may very properly be accommodated to it. *Take Us the Foxes, those little Foxes.* They are little in Size, and seem not very formidable. But they are extremely mischievous, and *spoil our Vines.* They prey upon our Comfort; they eat away the Vigour of our Obedience; and make all our Graces a mere Dwarf, if not a dead Shrub.

* Matt. xiv. 31. Luke xii. 29. 1 Tim. ii. 8.





DIALOGUE XVIII.



S E E, *Theron* ! See yonder black and low-hung Cloud ! It points this Way. It is big with a Shower ! It marches on apace ; and will soon be over our Heads. We must instantly fly to Shelter.

Ther. It is well We have this Summer-house for our Shelter. The thickest Boughs would be insufficient to screen Us. I think, I never saw a more impetuous Burst of Rain. A Shower ! No, 'tis a descending *Deluge*. The large, ropy, reeking Drops, come down like a Torrent *.—Surprising ! What a dreadful

* *Come down like a Torrent.*—This is the Import of that strong picturesque Word *ורמו* *Psal.* lxxvii. 17. In this Manner, *The Clouds poured out Water ; while the Air thundered ; and the Arrows of the ALMIGHTY went abroad.* Mr. *Addison*, if I remember right, admires the Psalmist's Description of a Storm at Sea ; because, it dwells only upon the grand and most striking Circumstances ; without descending, like *Virgil's* enervated Representation, to such little Particulars, as the Cries of Men, and the Noise of Oars. *Clamorque Virum, Stridorque Rudentum.*—
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dreadful *Flash* was there! A Sheet of sulphureous Fire, launched from the dismal Gloom, and wrapping the whole Skies in a Blaze!—Not a Moment's Interval, between the Lightning's Rage, and the Thunder's Roar. How sudden and vast the Explosion! What a deep, prolonged, tremendous Peal ensues! It seems, as if the Poles of Earth, and the Pillars of Nature cracked!

See, my dear *Aspasio*! See the direful Havock; the horrid Effects of this elementary Tumult.—Yonder Oak, which reared its towering Head aloft, and spread wide its graceful Branches, is, in the Twinkling of an Eye, turned into a *naked Trunk*. There it stands, singed and tore; stripped of its verdant Honours*, and surrounded with its own shattered

This Description of a *Tempest* is, I think, equally admirable on the same Account. The three greatest and most terrible Peculiarities are selected; and expressed with all the Conciseness, yet with all the Vigour, which Language can unite.

I have not met with any Commentator, who enters into the Spirit of the next Verse. And in our Liturgy Translation, its Majesty sinks into Meanness, its Propriety degenerates into Tautology. Whereas it is by no means a vain Repetition; but heightens and enlarges the formidable Idea, by displaying the Effects of what had been described, in the foregoing Lines. *The Voice of thy Thunder was in the Heaven*; the Vellies not only resounded, but resounded from Pole to Pole, and filled בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ the vast Circumference of the Skies. *The Lightnings lightened the World*; the Flashes not only shone, but shone far and near, and illuminated the whole World with their Blaze. *The Earth trembled to its Center, and its Inhabitants shook with Horror*.

* Does not this give Us the most awful and grand Sense of *Psalms xxix. 9.* *The Voice of the LORD*, when uttered in Thunder, and accompanied with Lightning.

וּבְרָקָה

shattered Fragments. How fearful is the Artillery of Heaven!

Asp. And why—why did not the Blow fall on this guilty Head? Why was not the fiery Bolt, which flew so near, commissioned to pierce our Hearts?—If our heavenly FATHER has been so tenderly careful of these perishing *Bodies*, will He not be much more gracious to our immortal *Souls*? Will he not clothe them with that immaculate Robe, which is the only Security from the Stroke of eternal Vengeance?—And let me ask, can this be a Security to Us, unless We are vested with it! Could this Building, though very substantial, have secured Us from the rushing Rains, if We had not betaken Ourselves to its friendly Covert!

CHRIST is represented, in the Prophecy of *Isaiah*, by this very Image; as a *Place of Refuge*, and as a *Covert from the Storm and from Rain* *. That is, His Merits and Death are a sure Protection, from the Curse of the Law, and the Damnation of Hell. No Fury of the Elements so terrible as *these*; no Bulwark of Stone so impregnable as *those*.—If this is a proper Emblem of *CHRIST*, to what shall We liken *Faith*? To a Persuasion, that the Shelter of the Summer-house is *free* for our Use? To a high Esteem of its Accommodation, an earnest Desire after its Protection, or an habitual Tendency towards it?—Would this defend Us from the Inclemencies of the Weather? Would this keep Us dry,

יחשף יערות, not discovereth the thick *Bushes*, but strips the *Forest*; lays bare the branching Woods; reduces the most magnificent and flourishing Cedars to naked and withered Trunks. See *Joel* i. 7.

* *Isai.* iv. 6.

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dry, amidst (what You call) the descending Deluge? Would this Esteem, Desire, or Tendency, unless carried into actual Entrance and Possession, be a proper Safeguard, or indeed any Manner of Advantage to our Persons?

Ther. No, *Aspasio*; neither would a Persuasion that the Summer-house is mine.

Asp. True: but a Belief that *CHRIST* is mine, is like entering the Summer-house. When the Divine SPIRIT reveals the Grant of an all-sufficient SAVIOUR, made and tendered to me a Sinner—when I am enabled to confide in his Death, as the Reconciliation for my Iniquities; and in his Obedience, as the Matter of my Justification—when I live in the Exercise of this realizing, appropriating Faith—then I make that Use of *CHRIST*, and receive that Benefit from Him; which correspond with the Repose and Security, We now enjoy amidst this hospitable Structure. Then, as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks, *I enter into the Chambers, the Chambers of Peace and Salvation, and shut the Doors about me* *.

Ther. May I then, from this Instant, look upon *CHRIST*, his glorious Person, his perfect Righteousness, and his precious Death, as my certain Inheritance? May I firmly believe, that in this immensely meritorious REDEEMER, I have Pardon of Sins, the Promises of the Gospel, and all spiritual Blessings, granted unto me without any Condition or any Reserve?

Asp. Why should You not believe all this *firmly*? You have the same Reason to believe with a steady Confidence, as to believe with any Degree of Assurance.

fiance. It is the free Promise of the Gospel, addressed to *Sinners*, that warrants the latter; and the very same Promise, under the same Circumstances of *unmerited* Munificence, authorizes the former.

You have heard my Opinion, hear now what our LORD Himself says; *Let Him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let Him take the Water of Life freely* *. The Water of Life is that, which produces, maintains, and strengthens the Life of GOD in the Soul. An Office, which nothing can perform, but those spiritual Blessings, You have just been mentioning. These let the thirsty, let the Sinner, let *whoever will*, take; as freely, as He makes use of the most common Refreshments; as freely, as He drinks of the running Stream. This is the royal Proclamation.—

Hear his gracious Invitation. *Look unto Me, and be ye saved* †; saved from your disquieting Fears, by Justification; saved from your domineering Corruptions, by Sanctification; saved from every Evil, by complete and eternal Redemption. To whom is this most affectionate Call directed? Not to a few distinguished Favourites only, but to *all the Ends of the Earth*. None are excepted; none are prohibited; and can my *Theron* imagine, that He is excluded?

Nay farther; Hear our LORD's earnest Entreaty; hear his tender and repeated Importunity; *As though GOD did beseech You by Us; We pray You, in CHRIST's Stead, be ye reconciled to GOD* ‡. Hark! 'Tis the Voice of infinitely condescending

Love,

* Rev. xxii. 17. † Isai. xlv. 22. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 20.

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Love, speaking by his Ambassador—"Sinners, "accept my great Salvation. Enjoy what I have "purchased for You, by my dying Agonies. Do "not suspect my Kindness, or refuse my Gifts. "This will wound me deeper, than the Spear which "pierced my Heart."—O! the Grace of our ex-
alted KING! He bows from his celestial Throne. He almost kneels to his guilty Creatures. He begs, He even begs of obnoxious Sinners, not to reject his Mercies.—After all this, can you entertain the least Doubt, *Theron*, whether you have a Permission to believe firmly?

Ther. This is extraordinary Goodness indeed! I have often read these Passages, but never saw them, till this Hour, in a Light so engaging, and so encouraging.

Asp. Should not this three-fold Cord be strong enough to draw my dear Friend; let me add (what must absolutely supersede all Objections) the plain, express, peremptory Command of the ALMIGHTY: *This is his Command, that We should believe on the Name of his Son JESUS CHRIST**. Pray, examine the Language; Not He *allows* only; or barely *advises*; but He *commands* †. We are not only

* 1 John iii. 23.

† *Luther*, at a certain Time, was violently harassed and afflicted with Temptations. Inasmuch, that his Heart was rent with Anguish; the Tears streamed from his Eyes; and his Breath was spent in Sighing. Amidst these Pangs of Distress, a Person accosted Him with the following Words; "My Son, why dost Thou mourn? "Dost Thou not know, that GOD hath *commanded* "Thee to believe?"—When I heard that Word COMMAND, says the zealous Reformer, it prevailed more

436 DIALOGUE XVIII.

only permitted, but strictly required. It is not only our Privilege, but GOD's positive Injunction.—Upon the Discovery of such a SAVIOUR, methinks every Heart should cry; "O! that I might be allowed to approach him! To solicit an Interest in Him! How gladly would I wait, ever so long a time, in ever so mean a Posture, if I might at the last receive Him as my Portion?"—The superabundant Goodness of GOD, prevents our Wishes, and exceeds our Hopes. "I freely give my SON, saith the LORD, and all his Riches to You. I beseech You, as a compassionate *Friend*, not to refuse Him. I enjoin You, as an uncontrollable *Sovereign*, to believe on Him."—Gracious! most amazingly gracious is this Command! And give me leave to hint, it is the greatest, the most important Command, that ever issued from the Throne of Glory. If this be neglected, no other can be kept; if this be observed, all others will be easy.

Now, *Theron* shall We not receive CHRIST, and look upon his all-sufficient Merits, as our own? Is not our Warrant clear and unexceptionable? Nay, is not our Obligation strong and indispensable? Shall We still displease the most high GOD, and give Him Occasion to say? *How long will this People provoke me? And how long will it be, e'er they believe me, for all the Signs which I have shew-*

on my Heart, than all that I had heard, or read, or thought on before.

Upon this Text Mr. *Ambrose* very properly argues; The LORD hath commanded me to believe; therefore it is my Duty. But because I cannot believe, unless I apply the Promise to myself; therefore it is my Duty to conclude, that the Promise belongs to me.

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ed amongst them *, and all the Encouragements which I have given to them.

Ther. Is this Command directed to *Sinners* †? Make this appear; and then I will readily own; That a fuller Proof of your Point, cannot be urged; a stronger Inducement to believe, cannot be produced.

Ans. You set me a Task, as easy, as it is pleasing. If I could not demonstrate this Point, I should be at a Loss to discover any glad Tidings in the Gospel.—I mention not the Jaylor of *Philippi*, who was prevented in the very Act of Suicide. I pass by the Woman of *Samaria*, who lived in a Course of Fornication. I shall exhibit one Proof only, which may serve instead of Multitudes. Our LORD's Commission to his Apostles is, *Go Ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature* ‡.—Should You enquire; What is the Gospel? We cannot have a better Expofitor, than the Angel from Heaven. *Behold! I bring good Tidings; or to speak more exactly according to the Original, καὶ εὐαγγέλιον I preach the Gospel.* The Tenour of which is; *To You is born a SAVIOUR, which is CHRIST the LORD* §. *A SAVIOUR*, to deliver You from Sin, from Hell, from every Evil. This SAVIOUR is *the LORD*; the great

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* Numb. xiv. 11. See also Psal. lxxviii. 22.

† This is the great Difficulty, to be got over by an awakened Conscience. Here She is startled and at a stand. Here She sees Lions raging to terrify her, and Mountains rising to oppose her. As this is the posing Question; the Scruple, that so often recurs in Fact and Experience; the Reader will not wonder, if it presents itself more than once, in the Dialogues.

‡ Mark xvi. 15.

§ Luke ii. 10, 11.

438 DIALOGUE XVIII.

JEHOVAH manifested in your Flesh; GOD Himself, becoming incarnate, on purpose to accomplish the marvelous Work.—Wherefore is this preached? Not to be the Subject of Speculation, but *for the Obedience of Faith* *. That Men may shew their dutiful Regard to the divine Testimony, by believing it for themselves. The only Obedience, that can be paid to such a Report. Therefore it is added, *To you* is born.—But who are called, thus to believe, thus to obey? *All the World; every Creature*. And can it be supposed, that all the World was holy? That every Creature was righteous? You well know, that, instead of being all righteous, there was None righteous, no, not one. They were altogether become abominable, and guilty before GOD. Yet was this Obedience of Faith enforced on, and enjoined to them; abominable and guilty as they were.—To this agreeth the *Westminster Confession*. “GOD freely offereth unto SINNERS Life and Salvation by JESUS CHRIST, requiring of them Faith in Him, that they may be saved.”

Ther. Truly, *Aspasio*, You put all my mistrustful Apprehensions to the Stand. Here is a *Proclamation* from the blessed GOD—seconded by his *Invitation*—accompanied by his *Entreaty*—enforced by his *Command*—and all addressed to *Sinners*. I know not what can be a fuller Proof of your Point, or a stronger Inducement to believe.

Asp. Yes, my Friend; I can produce (if such Thing be possible) stronger Proof still. Such as, hope, will totally rout Unbelief, and drive all her Forces from the Field.

* Rom. xvi. 26.

GOD has not only invited Us, entreated Us, and commanded Us, to live under the sweet Persuasion, that his SON is our SAVIOUR; but he has given Us the grandest *Ratification* of this precious Truth.—He has passed his Word; He has made Us a firm Promise; nay, He has given Us *many and various Promises*, of this inestimable Blessing. And GOD is not a Man, that He should lie; or the Son of Man, that he should repent. Hath He said, and shall He not do it? Or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good*? Heaven and Earth may drop into nothing, sooner than one Promise, or indeed one Jot or Tittle of his Promise, should fall to the Ground.

Besides this, He has given Us, if I may so speak, a Note under his own Hand. He has recorded his Promises in the Bible, and written them with an everlasting Pen. So that they will stand conspicuous and indelible, like a Bill drawn upon Heaven, and a Basis laid for Faith, so long as the Sun and Moon endure.

Nay, He has confirmed all, by the most solemn Sanction imaginable; by his *Oath*; by *his own Oath*; by the Oath of a GOD. Though his Word is sure, and his Promise immutable, He adds (astonishing Condescension! adorable Benignity!) He adds HIS OATH to all.—He not only speaks, but swears; swears by Himself; swears by his own eternal Existence; that his Promises belong—to whom? Mark this Particular with the most exact Attention. To whom do the Promises belong, which are ratified in this inviolable Manner?—To

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* Numb. xxiii. 19.

the Holy, the Upright, the Accomplished?— This is what Reason might imagine; but this is not what Revelation affirms. To those poor Sinners they belong, *who*, all obnoxious and undone, like Murtherers before the Officer of Justice, having nothing to plead, *fly for Refuge*. Fly to the Asylum, the Sanctuary, *the Hope set before them** in the Blood, the Righteousness, the ineffable Merits of *CHRIST*.

Ther. May I then believe; firmly believe; assuredly believe; that *JESUS* the Mediator, and all the Promises of the Gospel, all the Benefits of his Mediation, are mine? Pardon me, *Aspasio*, for reiterating the Question. I am really, with respect to the Obedience of Faith, too much like that *Saxon* Monarch, who, for his Remissness and Inactivity, was surnamed *The Unready* †.

Asp. I do more than pardon my *Theron*. I feel for Him, and I sympathize with Him. Not because He has not sufficient Evidence from the Word of *GOD*, for the appropriating Persuasion, so necessary to his Happiness; but because I also have experienced that perverse Tendency in my Heart, to mistrust the infallible Word of my *GOD*, as

* *Heb.* vi. 17, 18. The Promises are confirmed, in this wonderful Manner, not to those only who *have fled*, but to those also who *fly*. Intimating, that in the very first Act of flying to *CHRIST*, guilty Creatures have a Right to look upon all the Promises as their own. Every one made as sure to them, as the Oath of a *GOD* can make it. The Original is, not *οι καλανεψοτες*; but *οι καταψοτες*; and should be translated, not *who have fled*, but *who do fly*.

† *ETHELRED.*

DIALOGUE XVIII. 44

though He was less to be depended on than fallible Man.

But let Us reflect a Moment—Suppose any Neighbour of Substance and Credit, should bind himself by a deliberate *Promise*, to do you some particular Piece of Service—if he should add to his Promise a *Note* under his own Hand—if he should corroborate both by some authentic *Pledge*—if he should establish all by a most awful and solemn *Oath*—Could you suspect the Sincerity of his Engagement, or harbour any Doubt with regard to its Execution? This would be most unreasonable in any One; and to your generous Temper, I am very certain, it would be impossible.—Let us remember, that GOD has given us all this Cause for an Assurance of Faith, and more. Nay; I will defy the most timorous and suspicious Temper, to demand from the *most treacherous* Person on Earth, a greater, stronger, fuller Security, than the GOD of infinite Fidelity has granted to you and me.—After all this, one would think, Diffidence itself could no longer hesitate, nor the most jealous Incredulity demur. Can we withhold that Assurance from the unchangeable CREATOR, which we could not but repose on a variable Creature?

Ther. You rouse and animate me, *Aspasio*. O! that I may, with the divine Assistance, shake off this Stupor of Unbelief! Certainly, it can never be honourable to GOD, nor pleasing to CHRIST, nor profitable to Ourselves.

Asp. If it be, then cherish it; maintain it; and never relinquish it.—But how can it be honourable

to GOD? It depreciates his Goodness; it is a Reproach to his Veracity; nay, the Apostle scruples not to affirm, that it *makes him a Liar* *. Whereas, by believing his Testimony, we glorify his Faithfulness; glorify his Beneficence; and, as *John* the Baptist speaks, *set to our Seal, that GOD is true* †.—I have been informed, that, when the late *Elect*or of *Hanover* was declared, by the Parliament of *Great-Britain*, Successor to the vacant Throne; several Persons of Distinction waited upon his Highness, in order to make timely Application for the most valuable Preferments. Several Requests of this Nature were granted, and each was confirmed by a kind of promissory Note. One Gentleman, particularly, solicited for the *Master*ship of the *Rolls*. Being indulged in his Desire, he was offered the same Confirmation, which had been vouchsafed to other successful Petitioners. Upon which, he seemed to be under a

Pang

* 1 *John* v. 10. *He that believeth not GOD, hath made Him a Liar.* How, or wherein? *Because He believeth not the Record, that GOD hath bore concerning his SON.* What is this Record, whose Disbelief brings such Guilt upon Us, and puts such an Affront upon GOD? It is this; *That GOD hath given to Us eternal Life, in and with his SON.* Not that He hath given the invaluable Blessing to some Persons, distinguished and peculiarly happy. Not that He hath given it to all the Saints and all the Elect. This even Men of reprobate Minds believe. Yet do they not hereby set to their Seal, That GOD is true. Therefore the proper Belief is, That GOD hath given eternal Life to lost Mankind, and to us in particular. So given it, that We, as well as They, are warranted and welcome to take Possession of it by Faith.

† *John* iii. 33.

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Pang of graceful Confusion and Surprise ; begged, that he might not put the royal Donor to such unnecessary Trouble ; at the same time protesting, that he looked upon his Highness's *Word*, as the very best Ratification of his Suit.—With this Conduct, and this Compliment, the Elector was not a little pleased. “ This is the Gentleman, he said, “ who does me real Honour ; treats me *like a King* ; “ and whoever is disappointed, He shall certainly “ be gratified.” So, the Patriarch, *who staggered not* through Unbelief, *gave*, and in the most signal, the most acceptable Manner, *Glory to GOD* *. Respecting Him as a Being, of boundless Benignity, and eternal Veracity.

Is it *pleasing to CHRIST*?—Quite the reverse. It dishonours his Merit ; it detracts from the Dignity of his Righteousness ; it would enervate the Power of his Intercession. Accordingly you may observe, there is nothing which our LORD so frequently reprov'd in his Followers, as this Spirit of Unbelief.—What says He to his Disciples, when He came down from the Mount of Transfiguration ? *O faithless and perverse † Generation !* They were perverse, because faithless.—What says He to the Travelers, whom He overtook in their Journey to *Emmaus* ? *O Fools, and slow of Heart*
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* Rom. iv. 20.

† *Δυσραμμεν*, Matt. xvii. 17. Which Expression intimates, that a believing State of Mind, is like some well arranged and beautiful System of Limbs. Whereas, Unbelief *dislocates* the Parts, and *distorts* the harmonious Frame ; Unbelief destroys its comely Proportions, and interrupts its regular Operations.

444 DIALOGUE XVIII.

to believe *! They were Fools, because slow to believe.—What says He to the Apostles, after his Resurrection? *JESUS upbraided them with their Unbelief* †. He took no notice of their cowardly and perfidious Behaviour; He inveighed against none of their other Follies and Infirmities; but He upbraided them with their Unbelief. Not gently rebuked. No; this was a Fault, so unreasonable in itself, so reproachful to their MASTER, so pernicious to themselves, that He *severely reprimanded* them for it; with an Air of Vehemence, and with a Mixture of Invective.

Is it *profitable to Ourselves*?—Nothing less. It damps our Loye, and diminishes our Comfort. It subjects Us to that Fear, which hath Torment; and disqualifies Us for that Obedience, which is filial. In a word; this distrustful and unbelieving Temper

* *Ανοητοί*, Luke xxiv. 25. Not *thoughtless*, but *stupid* Creatures; void of Understanding; as we say in *English*, without common Sense; or, as *Horace* would have said in *Latin*,

O tribus Anticyris Caput insanabile!

† *Mark* xvi. 14. The Word is not *ἐπιμνησκον*, as in *Luke* xvii. 3. not *ελεγεν*, as in *Tit.* i. 13. but *ωνιδιοι*. Which signifies, not barely a Rebuke, but a Rebuke accompanied with *keen* and *stinging* Reflections; such as may cover the Face with Blushes, and wound the Heart with Anguish.—It is used, by the Evangelist *Luke*, and by the Apostle *Peter*, to describe those Calumnies, Invectives, and Reproaches, with which the Persecutors of Christianity endeavoured to *gall* and *afflict* the Christians. *Luke* vi. 22. *1 Pet.* iv. 14.—Though our *LORD JESUS* was most amiably tender and gentle; yet, when Severity was necessary and wholesome, He knew how to be severe. Our all-wise *PHYSICIAN* could apply the *Cautic*, as well as administer the *Cordial*. See a most pregnant Exemplification of this Remark, *Matt.* xii. 19, 20. compared with *Vers.* 34, &c.

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Temper weakens every Principle of Piety, and impoverishes the whole Soul.—Whence come spiritual Inactivity and Remissness? Whence proceed Sterility and Unfruitfulness in the Knowledge of *CHRIST*? St. *Peter* ascribes them all to an habitual Unbelief. Such Persons, he says, *have forgotten that they were purged from their former Sins* *. A Forgetfulness of this grand Benefit is, to every Kind of practical Godliness, like a Lethargy to the Powers of the Body †, or like a Blast to the Fruits of the Tree ‡.

Let Us then, my dear Friend, *cast away this Sin*, which *so easily besets Us* both. It clogs our Feet; it hampers all our Powers; and hinders Us from *running* with Alacrity and Speed, *The Race that is set before Us*.—What says *David*? *GOD hath spoken in his Holiness* ||; hath made an express and inviolable Promise, that I shall be Ruler of his People *Israel*. *I will rejoice therefore*; away with every alarming Apprehension. Notwithstanding all Opposition, I will exult in Hope. Nay more; *I will divide Shechem, and mete out the Valley of Succoth*; I will look upon the whole Land as my own. I will divide it, and dispose of it, just as if it was already in my Possession—Why should not you and I also say? *GOD hath spoken in his Holiness*; hath expressly and solemnly declared, *The Promise* of an all-

* 2 Pet. i. 8, 9.

† *Αργος*.

‡ *Αναργος*. The Greek, *αργος* which We translate *barren*, signifies *supine, negligent, slothful*. This varies the Idea, and points out the immediate Cause of the Evil, which is expressed in the following Word *αναργος*. *Slothfulness* occasions *Unfruitfulness*, and both are produced by *Unbelief*.

|| Psal. lx. 6.

all-sufficient SAVIOUR *is to You.* We will rejoice therefore; confiding in this most faithful Word, We will bid adieu to all disquieting Fears, and make our Boast of this glorious REDEEMER. Yes; notwithstanding all our Unworthiness, *CHRIST* and his Atonement, *CHRIST* and his Righteousness, are ours. GOD hath passed his Word; and his Word shall stand for ever. Amidst all the Fluctuations of our Temper, and all the Surges of Temptation, this is our Anchor. Its Hold is firm, and its Ground immoveable*.

Ther. I have heard some People distinguish, between the Faith of *Reliance*, and the Faith of *Assurance*; between the *reflex* and the *direct* Act of Faith. Methinks, I approve these Sentiments, though I dislike the Terms. The Sentiments are happily adapted, to the Relief of human Infirmary; though the Terms are rather too abstruse, for ordinary Capacities to understand.

Asp. I cannot say, that I am very fond, either of the one, or of the other. In my Opinion, they both partake too much of the Subtlety of the Schools; and are more likely to create Perplexity, than to administer godly Edifying. For which Reason, I should choose to drop the difficult Phrases, and

* This very important Doctrine is more copiously displayed, in a Sermon of Mr. *Erskine's* on the *Assurance of Faith*, Vol. III. p. 201.—Were I to read, in order to refine my Taste, or improve my Style; I would prefer Bishop *Atterbury's* Sermons, Dr. *Bates's* Works, or Mr. *Seed's* Discourses. But were I to read, with a single View to the Edification of my Heart, in true Faith, solid Comfort, and evangelical Holiness; I would have recourse to Mr. *Erskine*, and take his Volumes for my Guide, my Companion, and my own familiar Friend.

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and not to dwell on the nice Distinctions. Yet, if We must not dismiss them, without some Notice, I would just remark—

That the Faith of *Reliance*, in its true scriptural Sense, includes or presupposes a Degree of Assurance.—*Includes*; for what is Reliance, but a Repose of the Mind, which is attended with Tranquility, and excludes Perturbation? How can this take place, if there be no Sort of Conviction, That *the LORD is my Light and my Salvation?*—*Presupposes*; for, who would rely on a Satisfaction made, without being persuaded, that the Satisfaction is for Him and his Iniquities? Reliance, separated from this Persuasion, seems to be neither comfortable, nor reasonable.

As to those, who insist upon what they call the *reflex* Act of Faith; sure, they mistake the Nature of the Thing. This, if I understand them aright, is their Way of arguing; “I am a new Creature; “I love the *LORD JESUS* in Sincerity; I “have the Fruits of the *SPIRIT*. From “whence it is plain, that *CHRIST* and his “Salvation are mine.” Now, in all this Procedure, I cannot discern the least Foot-step of Faith; no not the least Trace of receiving a Testimony, or relying upon a *SAVIOUR*. Here is nothing more than a logical Deduction of one Proposition from another; a Conclusion drawn from given Premises. Grant the latter, and any Person, without any Aid from the *SPIRIT*, will infer the former. It may, therefore, more properly be reckoned an Act of Reasoning, than of Believing; it is founded on what We Ourselves *feel*, not upon the *Record* of a faithful *GOD*; and it is styled,
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by judicious Writers, the Assurance of *Sense* rather than of Faith.

When, in Conformity to the afore-mentioned Opinion, We are advised to prove our Title to Comfort, by genuine Marks of Conversion; and taught, on this Column to fix the Capital of Assurance; I would rather propose a Question, than advance Objections.—Is not this somewhat like placing the Dome of a Cathedral, upon the Stalk of a Tulip?

Ther. No, say They; it was the Practice of the Apostle Himself; and He has left it upon Record, as a Pattern for all Posterity to copy. *We know that We are passed from Death unto Life, because We love the Brethren.*

Assp. Observe, *Theron*, the Process of the Apostle's Reasoning. It is like the Form of an inverted Cone; where You have first the Point, and from thence proceed to the Base. So the sacred Writer begins with the less, and ascends to the greater Proof. He says, in one of the following Verses; *Hereby perceive We the Love of GOD*, because He*
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* 1 John iii. 16. The Word *GOD* is not in the Original. It was omitted by the Apostle, just as the particular Name is omitted by *Mary*, when She speaks to the Gardener; *Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence*—and by the Church, when She addresses the sacred Object of her Affection; *Let Him kiss me with the Kisses of his Mouth*: John xx. 15. Cantic. i. 1.—In all which Places, there is a Language, a very emphatical Language, even in the Silence. It declares, how deeply the Heart was penetrated, how totally the Thoughts were possessed, by the beloved and illustrious Subject. It expresses also the superlative Dignity and Aimableness of the Person meant: as though *He*, and *He alone*, either was, or deserved

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VOL. III

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laid down his Life, not merely for Sinners, but *for Us* in particular.—Here, You see, is Assurance by the direct Act of Faith. From this Truth believed, from this Blessing received, the Love of the Brethren takes its Rise. Which may very justly be admitted as an Evidence, that our Faith is real, and our Assurance no Delusion. As yonder Leaves may serve to distinguish the particular Species, and ascertain the healthy State, of the Trees on which they grow.

When your Tenants bring in their Rent, this affords no contemptible Evidence, that the Lands, which they respectively occupy, are yours. But this is a Proof which does not occur, either every Day or every Week ; it is occasional only, and of the subordinate Kind.—The *grand* Demonstration, that which is always at hand, and always forcible, is, your Possession of the *Deeds* of Conveyance. Thus, the Promise of GOD in his divine Word is our Charter, or the authentic Conveyance of our Right to Pardon and Salvation. Make just the same Difference between this Promise and your own Holiness, as You make between the Writings of your Estate and the Receival of the Revenues, You will then judge aright, because your Judgment will coincide with the Apostle's.

Besides ; this Method of seeking Peace and Assurance, I fear, will perplex the Simple-minded ; and cherish, rather than suppress, the Fluctuations of Doubt. For, let the Marks be what You please, a Love of the Brethren, or a Love of all Righte-

VOL. III.

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served to be, known and admired by *All*. For which Reason, to mention his Name, or display his Excellencies, seemed as *needless*, as to shew Light to the opened Eye.

450 D I A L O G U E XVIII.

ousness, a Change of Heart or an Alteration of Life; these good Qualifications are sometimes like the Stars at Noon-Day, *not easily*, if at all, discernable; or else they are like a Glow-worm in the Night, *glimmering*, rather than shining. Consequently will yield, at the best, but a feeble, at the worst, a very precarious Evidence.—If, in such a manner, We should acquire some little Assurance, how soon may it be unsettled by the Incursions of daily Temptation, or destroyed by the Insurrection of remaining Sin! At such a Juncture, how will it keep its Standing! How retain its Being! It will fare like a tottering Wall, before the Tempest; or be *as the Rush without Mire, and the Flag without Water* *.

Instead therefore of poring on our own Hearts, to discover, by inherent Qualities, our Interest in *CHRIST*, I should rather renew my Application to the free and faithful Promise of the *L O R D*; assert and maintain my Title, on this *unalterable* Ground.—“ Pardon is mine, I would say, Grace “ is mine, *CHRIST* and all his spiritual Blessings are mine. Why? because I am conscious “ of sanctifying Operations in my own Breast? “ Rather because *G O D* hath spoken in his Holiness; “ because all these precious Privileges are con- “ signed over to me in the everlasting Gospel, with “ a *Clearness* unquestionable as the Truth, with a “ *Certainty* inviolable as the Oath of *G O D*.”

Cast your Eye into yonder Meadow. Take notice of that industrious *Fisherman*; how intent He is upon the Pursuit of his Business! He has just thrown his Net, and taken a considerable Booty.

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* Job viii. 14.

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DIALOGUE XVIII. 451

You do not see Him spending his Time in idle Triumphs, on account of his Success. He does not stand to measure the Dimensions of the Fish, or compute the Value of his Prize. But having, without Delay, secured the Captives; He prepares for *another* Cast, and hopes for *another* Draught.

So let Us, instead of exulting in any past Acquisitions, seek afresh to the inexhaustible Fulness of GOD our SAVIOUR. If we have been blessed with any Taste of his Goodness, or any Tokens of his Love, let Us not too fondly dote upon the Sweetness of such Experiences. Let Us not make them the Foundation of our Confidence, but only so many Encouragements to persevere and advance believing. That, having Life and having Peace from our Divine HEAD, we may have them *more abundantly**. Then will be fulfilled the Saying which is written; *The Just, the Righteous in JESUS CHRIST—shall live*, shall not only be delivered from Condemnation and Death, but shall thrive in Comfort, and flourish in Godliness—How? By reflecting on their Sanctification, or viewing their own Attainments? No; but by the infinitely more encouraging Views of their Completeness in CHRIST, and by a fresh, a repeated, a never-ceasing Exercise of Faith†, on that HOLY ONE of GOD.

This the Apostle has testified, and this the Prophet confirms. *Thou shalt keep Him in perfect Peace, whose Mind is staid in a fixed Dependence on Thee* †.

And

* John x. 10.

† Rom. i. 17.

† *Isai. xxvi. 3.* *לֹא יִדְּבֹל*. Not hovering in Suspense; doubtful, whether it shall confide, or no; but determined

And why? Because, such a Person, examining his Conduct, discovers the Evidences of a living Faith? This Answer many serious People would make. But the inspired Writer has made another; which I cannot but prefer, and in which I fully acquiesce. *Thou shalt keep Him in perfect Peace, BECAUSE He trusteth steadily, habitually, incessantly, trusteth in Thee.* Whatever Variations may happen, within Him or around Him, in the Frame of his Heart, or the Circumstances of his Life, as to this grand Point, He is fixed and invariable. He trusteth, still trusteth in THEE—in Thee, O thou adorable JEHOVAH; that all thy infinite Perfections are his Shield, and his exceeding great Reward—in Thee, O thou exalted JESUS; that all thy inconceivable Merits, are his justifying Righteousness, and the Strength of his Salvation—in Thee, O thou eternal SPIRIT; that Thou wilt never leave Him, nor forsake Him; but sanctify Him throughout, and support Him to the End.

This is the Expedient, the effectual and happy Expedient, to feed that Lamp of Godliness, and to quicken that Flame of Zeal; which, having cheered Us in our earthly Pilgrimage, and animated Us in our Christian Warfare, will be brightened into a Crown of immortal Glory in the Heavens.

Here the disappointed Visitants went in; and, after a slight Refreshment, took Coach.—As they were returning Home, *Theron* observed, not without Concern, the changed and melancholy Aspect of Things, in the Territories of the Husbandman.

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mined and established. *Vitrina*, upon the Place, very justly observes; *Vera Fidei est Character, esse firmam, solidam, bene suffultam, quæ excludit dubitationem.*

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The Fields of Corn, which a little while ago, were gracefully erect, or softly inclining to the Breeze, lay sunk and flatted under the impetuous Rains.—Such, added *Aspasio*, such I apprehend will be our Faith, if it is wholly separated from Assurance, or if its Assurance is erected on any Endowments of our own.

Ther. If this is the Case, what can be the Reason, why so many People are totally destitute of all religious Assurance? Have no Notion of it, much less aspire after it? Nay; would be much surprised, perhaps highly disgusted, at the very Mention of such a Doctrine.

Asp. If People never aspire after the Assurance of Faith, or an *appropriating* Interest in *CHRIST*, I very much question, whether they are truly awakened, or really in earnest. They are like the Men of *Ephraim*, whom the Prophet stiles a *Cake not turned* *; neither Bread, nor yet Dough; neither absolute Reprobates, nor real Saints. Or, as our *LORD* explains the Proverb, in his Charge against the Church of *Laodicea*, They are *neither hot nor cold* †. Not frozen in Insensibility, 'tis true; at the same Time, not fervent in Spirit; but indifferent and lukewarm in the Concerns of Religion.

Among the Reasons, why so few Persons attain this eminent Blessing, We may reckon the following.—They understand not the perfect *Freeness* of Grace, nor the *immensely* rich Merits of *CHRIST*.—They never consider the unspeakable *Value* of an assured Faith; neither are they aware, that it is for the Enjoyment of *Sinners*. Yes, of *Sinners*, even before they have one Mark of Reformation to

F f 3 shew,

* Hof. vii. .8

† Rev. iii. 15.

shew, or the least Evidence of any Goodness in Themselves *.—Either they seek it not at all; or else they seek it, where it is not to be found; from some Works of Righteousness in themselves, rather than from the gracious Promise of GOD in his Word. Which is altogether as ill judged, and as sure to issue in Disappointment, as if a Person should go in quest of Ice amidst the torrid Zone, or expect to find spicy Islands under the northern Pole.

But whether People consider it or no, the Value of an assured Faith is indeed unspeakable. When this is wrought in the Heart, Peace will stand firm, and Afflictions drop their Sting. Prayer will return laden with Treasures, and Death will approach stripped of its Terrors. The Soul will be *as a watered Garden*, and all her Graces *blossom as a Rose*.—When this is wrought in the Heart, the Gospel of *CHRIST*, will appear with new Charms, and operate with new Energy. Its Hymns will no longer be a strange Language to your Ear, nor its Privileges as forbidden Fruit to your Palate. You will then, as You peruse each sacred Page, feel it to be the Power of GOD, and *taste that the LORD is gracious* †. You will reap a Benefit, and enjoy a Delight, as much superior to those of the doubting Reader; as the Pleasure of *eating* this delicious Peach, is superior to the mere Description of its agreeable Relish.

Bear with me a Moment longer, *Theron*. For You can hardly imagine, what an Improvement

* See MARSHAL's *Gosp. Myst. Direct.* vii. and x. Where this Truth, little known, but very comfortable, is fully proved.

† 1 Pet. iii. 3.

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and Exaltation this will give, to every *Truth* You contemplate, and every *Object* You behold.—When You contemplate the Rise of Kingdoms, and the Fall of Empires; when You recollect the great and astonishing Events, recorded in the History of Nations; how highly delightful, to say! “All these passed under the Superintendency of *that Hand*, which was pierced with the bloody “Nail, and fastened to the cursed Cross for Me.”—When You behold the Magnificence of Creation, and the Richness of its Furniture; the Grandeur of Nature, and the Variety of her Works; what a heightened Pleasure must they all impart, if, as You view the glorious Scene, your Thoughts make Answer to your Eyes! “All these were “brought into Existence by *that adorable P E R-“SON*, who sustained my Guilt, and wrought “out my justifying Righteousness.”

O! that We may receive, by Faith, this most blessed REDEEMER! O! that our Faith may grow incessantly, *grow exceedingly**! Till it be rooted, like those full-grown Oaks, under which We lately walked! and grounded†, like that well-built Edifice, which is still in our View!

Ther. Most heartily I join in this Wish. O! that every Objection, for the future, may be superseded, as soon as started; and silenced, or ever it open its Mouth! I must beg of my Friend to inform me, how I may get the better of that unaccountable Mistrust and Diffidence, which I feel

F f 4 in

* 2 Thess. i. 3.

† *Rooted and grounded*, ἐρριζωμένοι καὶ τεθεμελιωμένοι. These are the Apostle's beautiful Ideas, or rather expressive Similitudes, each comprehended in a single Word. *Eph.* iii. 18.

in my Heart; and which have made me so easily susceptible of unbelieving Impressions.

Asp. You have entirely cured me, *Theron*, of making Apologies. Would to GOD, I might be as successfully instrumental, in delivering my Friend from his Doubts! That the Gospel might come to Us both, as it came to the *Thessalonian Converts*, not in Word only, but in Power, and in the HOLY GHOST, and in much Assurance*!

Prayer is one Expedient. Every good Gift is from above, and cometh down from the FATHER of Lights. CHRIST is not only the Object, but the Author and Finisher of our Faith. LORD, increase our Faith, was the Request of the Disciples, and should be the prevailing Language of our Hearts.

Faith cometh by hearing †, by meditating on, by praying over, this Word of Life, and Word of Grace. Lay up therefore many select Portions of Scripture, many of the divine Promises in your Memory. Stock that noble Cabinet with this invaluable Treasure.—And never, never forget the *Freeness*, with which the Promise is made, and its good Things are bestowed. You are to receive the one, and apply the other, not with a full, but with an empty Hand; not as a righteous Person, but as an unworthy Creature.

Make the Trial. Exercise Yourself in this great Secret of true Godliness. I am satisfied, it will be productive of the most beneficial Effects.—Look unto JESUS as dying in your Stead, and purchasing

* 1 Thess. i. 5.

† *Rom. x. 17.* On which Account the Scriptures are styled, *The Works of Faith*, 1 Tim. iv. 6.

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chasing both Grace and Glory for *your* Enjoyment. Come unto GOD, as a poor Sinner, yet with a *confident* Dependence; expecting all spiritual Blessings, through HIM that loved *You*, and gave Himself for *You*.—*He that believeth*, with this appropriating Faith, *shall not be confounded**, nor frustrated in his Expectations. *He that believeth*, with this appropriating Faith, *shall have the Witness in himself*†. Nothing will bring in such Light and Peace, such Holiness and Happiness to his Soul.—The *Ephesians*, thus believing, *were sealed with that Holy SPIRIT of Promise*‡. The dispersed of *Israel*, thus believing, *rejoiced with Joy unspeakable*||. Those were *marked out* as rightful Heirs, These were blessed with some delightful *Foretastes*, and both were prepared for the complete Fruition, of Life and Immortality. O! that We may be Followers of their Example, and Sharers of their Felicity!

As for those Doubts, which have given You so much Perplexity, and cost Us so long a Disquisition, look upon them as some of your *greatest Enemies*. Oppose them, with all the Resolution and all the Vigour of your Mind.—Nay; look upon those unreasonable Doubts, as some of your *greatest Sins*. Confess them, with the deepest Shame; and pray

* 1 Pet. ii. 6.

† 1 John v. 10.

‡ Eph. i. 13. Πιστευσαυτες εσφρατισθητε, not *After that Ye believed*; but *Believing Ye were sealed*. In the Way of Believing, Ye became Partakers of this sealing and sanctifying SPIRIT. Conformably to the Expostulation of the Apostle on another Occasion, *Received Ye the SPIRIT, by the Works of the Law, or by the Hearing of Faith?*

|| 1 Pet. i. 8.

458 D I A L O G U E XVIII.

pray against them, with the utmost Ardour.—With equal Affiduity and Zeal, let Us press after a steadfast, an immoveable, a triumphant Faith.—Faith is the Vehicle and the Instrument of every Good; *All Things are possible to Him that believeth* *.—Faith is the immediate and grand End of the whole Gospel; *These Things are written that Ye might believe* †.—Let Us therefore covet, earnestly let Us covet this best of Gifts, and *shew all Diligence to the FULL ASSURANCE of Faith* ‡, and the FULL ASSURANCE of Hope ||—by the first, thankfully receiving present Pardon—by the last, joyfully expecting future Glory.

* Mark ix. 23. † John xx. 31. ‡ Heb. x. 22.
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DIALOGUE XIX.



HE next Morning, *Theron*, ordered a cold Collation to be prepared, and his Pleasure-Boat to hold itself in Readiness.—Breakfast being dispatched, and some necessary Orders, relating to the Family, given—Now, says He to *Aspasio*, let me fulfil my Promise; or rather let us execute our mutual Engagement; and consign the Remainder of this mild and charming Day, to a rural Excursion.

We will take our Route along one of the *finest Roads* in the World. A Road, incomparably more curious and durable, than the famous Causeys raised by those puissant Hands, which conquered the Globe. A Road, which has subsisted from the Beginning of Time; and, though frequented by innumerable Carriages, laden with the heaviest Burdens, has never been gulled, never wanted Repair, to this very Hour.—Upon this, they step into the Chariot, and are conveyed to a large *navigable River*, about three Quarters of a Mile distant from the House.—Here they

they launch upon a new Element, attended by two or three Servants, expert at handling the Oar, and managing the Nets.

Is this the Road, replied *Assasio*, on which my Friend bestows his *Panegyric*? It is indeed more curious in its Structure, and more durable in its Substance, than the celebrated *Roman* Causeys. Though I must assure you, the latter have a very distinguished Share of my Esteem. I admire them far beyond *Trajan's* Pillar, or *Caracalla's* Baths; far beyond the idle Pomp of the *Pantheon*, or the worse than idle Magnificence of the *Amphitheatre*. They do the truest Honour to the Empire; because, while they were the Glory of *Rome*, they were a general Good*; and not only a Monument of her Grandeur, but a Benefit to Mankind.

More than all these Works, I admire that excellent and divinely gracious Purpose, to which Providence made the Empire itself subservient. It was a kind of Road or Causey, for the everlasting Gospel. It afforded the Word of Life a free and expeditious Passage, to the very Ends of the Earth. The *evangelical* Dove mounted the Wings of the *Roman* Eagle; and flew with surprising Rapidity, through all Nations.—Who would have thought, that insatiable Ambition and the most bloody Wars, should

* These Roads ran through all *Italy*, and stretched themselves into the Territories of *France*. They were carried across the *Alps*, the *Pyrenean* Mountains, and through the whole Kingdom of *Spain*. Some of them, towards the South, reached even to *Æthiopia*; and some of them, towards the North, extended as far as *Scotland*. The Remains of several of them continue in *England* to this Day; though they were made, it is probable, above 1600 Years ago.

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should be paving a Way for the PRINCE of Humility and Peace? How remote from all human Apprehension, was such a Design; and how contrary to the natural Result of Things, was such an Event! Most remarkably therefore was that Observation of the Psalmist verified: *His Ways are in the Sea, and his Paths in the great Waters, and his Foot-steps are not known.**

Conversing on such agreeable Subjects, they are carried by the Stream, through no less agreeable Scenes. They pass by Hills, clothed with hanging Woods; and Woods, arrayed in varying Green. Here, excluded from a Sight of the out-stretched Plains, they are entertained with a Group of *unsubstantial* Images, and the Wonders of a *miniature* Creation.—Another Sun shines, but stript of his blazing Beams, in the watery Concave. While Clouds sail along the downward Skies, and sometimes disclose, sometimes draw a Veil over, the radiant Orb. Trees, with their inverted Tops, either flourish in the fair Serene below; or else paint, with a pleasing Delusion, the pellucid Flood. Even the Mountains are there, but in a headlong Posture. Notwithstanding their prodigious Bulk, they quiver in this floating Mirror, like the poplar Leaves which adorn their Sides.

Soon as the Boat advances, and disturbs the placid Surface; the Waves, pushed hastily to the Bank, bear off, in broken Fragments, the *liquid Landscape*. The spreading Circles seemed to prophesy, as they rolled; and pronounced the Pleasures of this present State—the Pomp of Power, the Charm of Beauty, and the Echo of Fame—pronounced them *transient*,

462 D I A L O G U E XIX.

as their speedy Passage; *empty*, as their unreal Freight.—Seemed to prophesy? It was more. Imagination heard them utter, as they ran;

Thus pass the shadowy Scenes of Life away!

Emerging from this fluid Alley, formed and overhung by Rocks and Trees, they enter the Level of an extensive Meadow. The Eye, lately *immured*, (though in pleasurable Confinement) now expands her View, into a Space almost boundless, and amidst Objects little short of innumerable.—Transported for a while, at the wonderful Variety of beauteous Images, poured in sweet Confusion all around, she hardly knows, where to fix, or which to pursue. Recovering, at length, from the pleasing Perplexity; she glances, quick and instantaneous, across the intermediate Plain, and marks the distant *Mountains*. How Cliffs climb over Cliffs, till the huge Ridges gain upon the Sky. How their diminished Summits stand dressed in Blue, or wraped in Clouds. While all their leafy Structures, and all their fleecy Tenants, are lost in Air.

Soon she quits these aerial Heights, and ranges the russet *Heath*: here, shagged with Brakes, or tufted with Rushes: there, interspersed with straggling Thickets, or solitary Trees; which seem, like disaffected Partisans, to shun each other's Shade.—A *Spire*, placed in a remote Valley, peeps over the Hills. *Sense*, surprised at the amusive Appearance, is ready to suspect, that the Column rises, like some enchanted Edifice, from the rifted Earth. But *Reason* looks upon it, as the Earnest of a hidden Vale, and the sure Indication of an adjacent Town. Performing, in this Respect, much the same Office

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to the Eye, as *Faith* executes with regard to the Soul, when it is *the Evidence of Things not seen* *.

Next, they rove, in eager and delighted Survey, over many a spacious Tract. Where the fertile Glebe spontaneously thrives; or the *cultured* Field, more than answers the Husbandman's Hopes. Where Cattle, of every graceful Form, and every valuable Quality, crop the tender Herb, or drink the crystal Rills.—Here, they see in Reality, what those inimitable Lines had often shewed them in Description; *Thou crownest the Year with thy Goodness, and thy Paths drop Fatness. They drop upon the Dwellings of the Wilderness and little Hills are girded with Joy. The Pastures are clothed with Flocks; the Vallies also are covered with Corn; they shout, yea, they sing* †.

Anon, they contemplate, with increasing Satisfaction, *Cities* of Opulence and Splendour. Which spread the sacred Dome, and lift the social Roof. Where the Senate-House and Exchange detain the Sight, with their majestic Dimensions; and awaken in the Mind the more venerable Ideas, of Justice administered, and of Commerce abounding. Cities, no longer surrounded with the stern forbidding Majesty,

* Heb. xi. 1.

† *Psal.* lxxv. 11, 12, 13. This, I think, is the finest Description of rural Affluence, and rural Prosperity, that Poetry or Language can boast.—There is something in our Translation of the last Clause, a certain *Curiosa Felicitas*, which exceeds, if I mistake not, even the Beauty of the Original. *The Vallies also shall stand so thick with Corn, that they shall laugh and sing.* The Idea of *smiling* or *laughing* seems, more happily than all other Images, to comport with the placid joyous Aspect of a Country, flourishing under the serene Skies, and basking in the Lap of Plenty.

jefty, of unpassable Intrenchments, and impregnable Ramparts ; but incircled with the delicate, the inviting Appendages of Gardens and Orchards. *Those*, decked with all the soft Graces of Art and Elegance ; *these*, blushing and pregnant with the more substantial Treasures of fruitful Nature.—Wreaths of ascending Smoke, intermingled with Turrets and lofty Pinnacles, seem to contend which shall get *farthest* from the Earth, and *nearest* to the Skies. Happy for the Inhabitants ! if such was the habitual Tendency of their Desires * ; if no other Contention was known in their Streets.

Villas,

* This Comparison, I think, cannot appear vulgar to those Persons, who have read, and who reverence, *The Book of Canticles*. There, the Church, ascending continually in devout Affections to her beloved JESUS, and to her heavenly Home, is characterized by this very Similitude. *Who is this that cometh out of the Wilderness like Pillars of Smoke ?* Cant. iii. 6.—Though it must be confessed, that this Similitude, like many of the Illustrations used in Scripture, might have a Sort of local Propriety ; peculiar to the People of that Age, Country, and Religion. It might probably refer to those Columns of Smoke, which arose from the *Burnt-offering*, or fumed from the Altar of *Incense*. If so, this Circumstance must give a Solemnity and Dignity to the Idea, of which many Readers are not at all aware, and which indeed no modern Reader can fully conceive.

May I take leave to mention another Comparison of this Kind ? *The Enemies of the LORD shall consume as the Fat of Lambs ; yea, even as the Smoke shall they consume away.* Psal. xxxvii. 20.—*As the Fat of Lambs ;* is not, to Us, a striking Representation. But to those, who attended the Altar ; who saw the unctuous and most combustible Parts of the Victim, blazing in the sacred Fire ; it presented a very lively Image. Which became still more apposite and significant, if this *Psalms* was sung, (as some evidently was, 2 Chron. xxix. 27, 28.) while the

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DIALOGUE XIX. 465

Villas, elegant and magnificent, seated in the Center of an ample Park, or removed to the Extremity of a lengthened Lawn: not far from a beautiful Reservoir of standing Waters, or the more salutary Lapse of a limpid Stream.—*Villages*, clad in homely Thatch, and lodged in the Bosom of clustering Trees. Rustics, singing at their Work; Shepherds, tuning their Pipes, as they tend their Flocks; Travellers, pursuing each his respective Way, in easy and joyous Security.

How pleasing, said *Aspasio*, is *our* Situation! How delightful is the Aspect of all Things! One would almost imagine, that nothing could exceed it, and that nothing can increase it. Yet there is a Method of *increasing* even this copious Delight, and of *heightening* even this exquisite Pleasure.—Let me desire my Friend, answered *Theron*, to explain his Remark; and not only to explain, but to exemplify.—If We view, resumed *Aspasio*, our own *prosperous*, and compare it with the *afflicted* Condition of Others, the Method I propose, will be reduced to Practice. Such a dark and mournful Contrast, must throw additional Brightness, even upon the brightest Scene.

VOL. III.

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Above,

the Sacrifice continued burning.—None, I believe, in such a Case, could forbear either to observe or to admire the beautiful *Gradation*: “The Enemies of the LORD
“shall perish as yonder *Fat*, which is so easily set on fire;
“and, when once in a Flame, is so speedily consumed.
“Nay, they shall be as the *Smoke*, which is still more
“transient. Whose light unsubstantial Wreaths, but
“just make their Appearance to the Eye; and, in a
“Moment, vanish into empty Air.”

466 DIALOGUE XIX.

Above, the Skies smile with Serenity ; below, the Fields look gay with Plenty ; all around, the sportive Gales

*Fanning their odoriferous Wings, dispense
Native Perfumes ; and whisper, whence they stole
Those balmy Spoils *.*

With Us all Circumstances are as *easy*, as the Wafture of the Boat ; as *smooth*, as the Flow of the Stream.—But let Us not forget those grievous Calamities, which befall our Brethren, in some remote Tracts of the Earth, or distant Parts of the Ocean. How many Sailors are struggling, vainly struggling, with all the Fury of rending Winds, and dashing Waves ! While their Vessel, flung to and fro by *tempestuous* Billows, is mounted into the Clouds, or plunged into the Abyfs. Possibly, the miserable Crew hear their Knell sounded, in the shattered Mast ; and see Destruction entering, at the bursting Planks. Perhaps, this very Moment, they pour the last, dismal, dying Shriek ; and sink, irrecoverably sink, in the all-overwhelming Surge.—The Traveller, in *Africa's* barren Wastes, (pale, even amidst those glowing Regions ; pale with prodigious Consternation) sees sudden Mountains rise, and roll on every Side. He sees the sultry Defart, ascending the Sky, and sweeping before the Whirlwind. What can he do ? Whither fly ? How escape the approaching Ruin ? Alas ! while He attempts to rally his Thoughts ; attempts to devise some feeble Expedient ; He is overtaken by the choking Storm, and suffocated amidst the *sandy Inundation*. The driving Heaps are, now, his Executioner ; as the drifted Heaps will, soon, be his Tomb.

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DIALOGUE XIX. 467

While *We* possess the valuable Privileges, and taste the delicious Sweets of *Liberty*, how many Partakers of our common Nature, are condemned to perpetual Exile, or chained to the Oar for Life! How many are immured in the Gloom of Dungeons, or buried in the Caverns of the Mines; never to behold the all-enlivening Sun again!—While Respect waits upon our Persons, and Reputation attends our Characters: are there not some unhappy Creatures, led forth by the Hand of *vindictive Justice*, to be Spectacles of Horror, and Monuments of Vengeance? Sentenced, for their enormous Crimes, to be broke Limb by Limb on the Wheel, or to be impaled alive on the lingering Stake. To these, the strangling Cord, or the deadly Stab, would be a most welcome Favour. But they must feel a *thousand Deaths*, in undergoing *one*. And this, too probably, is but the Beginning of their Sorrows; will only consign them over to infinitely more terrible Torment;

To waste eternal Days in Woe and Pain.*

While Ease and Pleasure, in sweet Conjunction, smoothe our Paths, and soften our Couch: how many are tossing on the Fever's fiery Bed, or toiling along Affliction's thorny Road! Some, under the *excruciating*, but necessary Operations of Surgery: their Bodies ripped open, with a dreadful Incision, to search for the torturing Stone; or their Limbs lopped off by the bloody Knife, to prevent the Mortification's fatal Spread. Some *emaciated* by pining Sickness, are deprived of all their animal Vigour; and transformed into Spectres, even before their

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Dissolution.

* MILTON.

468 DIALOGUE XIX.

Diffolution *. They are ready to adopt the Complaint of the *Psalmist*; *I am withered like Grass*; *my Bones are burnt up, as it were a Firebrand*; *I go hence like the Shadow that departeth*. While Health, that staple Blessing; which gives every other Entertainment its Flavour and its Beauty; adds the Gloss to all We see, and the Poignancy to all We taste; Health plays at our Hearts; Health dances in our Spirits; and mantles in our Cheeks, as the generous Champagne lately sparkled in our Glafs.

We are blest with a calm Possession of Ourselves; with Tranquility in our Consciences, and an habitual Harmony in our Temper. Whereas many, in the dark and doleful *Cells of Lunacy*, are gnashing their Teeth or wringing their Hands; rending the Air with Volleys of horrid Execrations, or burdening it with Peals of disconsolate Sighs. And O! what Multitudes, even amidst Courts and Palaces, are held in *splendid Vassalage*, by their own domineering Passions, or the Vanities of a bewitching World. Far less innocently, far more deplorably disordered †, than the fettered Madman, they are

* A very little Excursion of Thought will easily convince the Reader, that there is no Period of Time, in which some of these Calamities do not befall our Fellow-creatures, in one Part of the World or another.

† Give me any Plague, says an apocryphal Writer, but the Plague of the Heart, *Ecclus. xxv. 13*. Upon which judicious and weighty Apophthegm, *Masiniſſa's* Speech in *Mr. Thomson's Sophonisba*, is a very pertinent and affecting Paraphrase.

O! save me from the Tumult of the Soul!
From the wild Beast within!—For, circling Sands,
When the swift Whirlwind whelms them o'er the Lands;

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DIALOGUE XIX. 469

are gnawed by the envenomed Tooth of Envy ; they are agitated by the wild Sallies of Ambition ; or feel the malignant Ulcer of Jealousy, rankling in their Breasts. In Some, Avarice, like a ravening Harpy, gripes. In Some, Revenge, like an implacable Fury, rages. While Others are goaded by lordly and imperious Lusts, through the lothesome *Sewers* of impure Delight ; and left, at last, in those hated and execrable *Dens*, where Remorse rears her snaky Crest, and Infamy sharpens her hissing Tongue. — — — — —

Why this long Pause ? replied *Theron*. Your Observations are as useful, as they are just. We should all be acquainted, at least in Speculation acquainted, with Grief ; and send our Thoughts, if not our Feet, to visit the Abodes of Sorrow.—That, in this School, We may learn a sympathizing Pity, for our distressed Fellow-creatures ; and see, in this Glass, our inexpressible Obligations to the distinguishing Goodness of Providence. Which has crowned our Table with Abundance, and replenished our Cup with Delicacies ; permitting neither Penury to stint the Draught, nor Adversity to mingle her Gall.—Go on, I must intreat You, with your Description of *comparative Felicity*. We have a large Circuit still to make, before We arrive at our in-

G g 3 tended

*The roaring Deep, that to the Clouds arise,
While thwarting thick the mingled Lightning flies ;
The Monster-brood, to which this Land gives Birth,
The blazing City, and the gaping Earth ;
All Deaths, all Tortures in one Pang combin'd,
Are gentle to the Tempest of the Mind.*

tended Port. And I could wish, that your Discourse might keep pace with the Current.

Since You approve the Subject, answered *Aspasio*, I will pursue it a little farther.—We, the Inhabitants of this favoured Isle, breathe an Air of the most agreeable Temperature, and most wholesome Qualities. But how many Nations languish in a torrid Clime, vaulted as it were with Fire? They welter amidst those Furnaces of the Sun, till their “Visagé is burnt, and black as a Coal *.”—What is far more disastrous, Beds of Sulphur and combustible Materials, lie in subterraneous Ambush, ready to spring the irresistible Mine. Ere long—perhaps, on some Day of universal Festivity †, or in some Night of deep Repose—to be touched by Heaven’s avenging Hand.—Then, with what outrageous Violence will they burst! Rock the Foundations

* Lam. iv. 8.

† There is a remarkable Passage in *Psal. lviii. 9.* which seems to denote some such unexpected, but speedy and inevitable Doom. The Sense is darkened, not a little, by the Version admitted into our Liturgy. I believe, the true Translation may be seen in the following *Italics*, and the true Meaning learnt from the interwoven Paraphrase.—Speedily, or before your Pots can perceive the Warmth of blazing Thorns, shall HE that ruleth over all, sweep away the Wicked: sweep him away by a Stroke of righteous Indignation, as by a fierce and mighty Tempest; so that, even from the Fulness of his Sufficiency, and the Height of his Prosperity, He shall be plunged into utter Destruction.—The Word *רָוָה*, which is very improperly translated, *A Thing that is raw*, signifies a State of Prosperity or pleasurable Enjoyment. 1 Sam. xxv. 6.—The whole Verse, in a Gradation of striking Images, gives Us a most awful Display of divine Vengeance. Vengeance quite sudden; utterly irresistible; and overtaking the secure Sinner, amidst all the Caresses of, what the World calls, *Fortune*.

dations of Nature ! Wrench open the ponderous Jaws of Earth ! And swallow up astonished Cities, in the dark, tremendous, closing Chasm !

These *Earthquakes*, it may be, both precede and portend, *the Pestilence that walketh in Darknefs, and the Sicknefs that destroyeth at Noon-day* *. They are, at once, a fearful Omen, and a ruinous Blow. The stagnating Atmosphere, rank with malignant Vapours, becomes a Source of deadly Infection : or, replete with poisonous Animalcules, is one vast incumbent Cloud of *living Bane*. If the active Gales arise, they arise only to stir the Seeds of Disease, and diffuse the fatal Contagion far and near.—Unhappy People ! The *Plague*, that severe Minister of divine Indignation, fixes her Head-quarters in their blasted Provinces ; and sends Death abroad, on his pale Horse †, to empty their Houses, depopulate their Towns, and croud their Graves.

Our Island is seldom visited with either of these dreadful Judgments ; and has never sustained any very considerable Calamity from the former. However, let Us not be presumptuously secure. We have, not long ago, received an awful Warning. The Rod has been shaken, or rather the Sword has been brandished, over our Territories.—Who can forget the general Consternation, which seized our *Metropolis*, on Occasion of the late Earthquake ? And not without Reason. For, of all divine Visitations, this is the most terribly vindictive. The Whirlwind is *slow* in its Progress ; War is *gentle* in its Assaults ; even the raging Pestilence is a *mild* Rebuke ; compared with the Fury of an Earthquake. — The Earthquake neither gives

G g 4

Warning,

* Psal. xci. 6.

† Rev. vi. 8.

Warning, nor allows Quarter. Suddenly it comes ; in a most unexpected Moment ; and spreads undistinguished Ruin. Amazing Blow ! From which there is no Method of Defence, and no Place of Refuge. Destructive Visitation ! Which rends the firmest, overwhelms the stateliest Works ; and puts an End, in a few Minutes, to the Labour of Ages.

Should almighty Vengeance stir up again those fierce subterranean Commotions : should the most high GOD bid strong Convulsions tear the Bowels of Nature, and make the Foundations of the World tremble like a Leaf : What, *O ye careles ones* *, What will You do ? Whither will You fly ?—See ! the Pavement sinks under your Feet. Your Houses are tottering over your Heads. The Ground, on every Side, cracks and opens like a gaping Grave ; or heaves and swells like a rolling Sea. *A Noise of Crashing* † is heard from without, occasioned by the rending Streets, and falling Structures. Thunders, infernal Thunders ‡, below from beneath ; mingled with despairing Shrieks, and dying Groans. Shrieks and Groans from those wretched Creatures, who are jammed between the closing Earth, or going down alive into the horrible Pit ||.—Where now will You fly ? To your

strong

* Isai. xxxii. 11.

† Zeph. i. 10.

‡ Before the Overthrow of *Catania* by an Earthquake, a Noise was heard, vast and horrid, as if all the Artillery in the World was discharged at once.

|| Very memorable, and equally tremendous, is the Account of the Earthquake, which visited *Sicily*, in the Year 1693.—It shook the whole Island. The Mischief it caused, is amazing. Fifty-four Cities and Towns, beside an incredible Number of Villages, were either

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strong Towers? They are shattered Pieces.—To the stronger Rocks? They are thrown out of their Place.—To the open Fields? They are a frightful Gulph, yawning to devour You.—Where-ever You fly ;

demolished, or greatly damaged. *Catania*, one of the most famous and flourishing Cities in the Kingdom, was entirely destroyed. Of 18,914 Inhabitants, 18,000 perished.

Another Earthquake, almost as dreadful, and in the same Year, spread Desolation through the Colony of *Jamaica*. In two Minutes Time, it shook down, and laid under Water, nine Tenths of the Town of *Port-royal*. In less than a Minute, three Quarters of the Houses, and the Ground they stood on, together with the Inhabitants, were quite sunk : and the little Part left behind, was no better than Heaps of Rubbish.—The Shake was so violent, that it threw People down upon their Knees, or their Faces, as they were running about for Shelter. The Ground heaved and swelled, like a rolling Sea ; and several Houses, still standing, were shuffled some Yards out of their Places. The Earth would crack and yawn ; would open and shut, quick and fast. Of which horrid Openings, two or three hundred might be seen at once. In some whereof, the People went down, and were seen no more. In some they descended, and rose again in other Streets, or in the Middle of the Harbour. Some swiftly closing, seized the miserable Creatures, and pressed them to death ; leaving their Heads, or half their Bodies above Ground, to be a Spectacle of Terror, and a Prey to Dogs. Out of others would issue whole Rivers of Water, spouted to a great Height in the Air, and threatening a Deluge to that Part, which the Earthquake spared—Scarce a Planting-house or Sugar-work was left standing in all the Island. Two thousand Lives were lost, and a thousand Acres of Land sunk. The whole was attended with frightful Noises, with brimstone Blasts, and offensive Smells. The noisome Vapours belched forth, corrupted the Air, and brought on a general Sickness ; which swept away more than three thousand of those, who escaped the Fury of the Earthquake. See CHAMB. *Dict.* on the Word *Earthquake*.

474 DIALOGUE XIX.

fly ; in the Wilderness of your Distraction, where-
ever you seek for Shelter : It shall be, *as if a Man
fled from a Lion, and a Bear met Him ; or went into
the House, and leaned his Hand upon the Wall, and a
Serpent bit Him* *.

I said, “ There is no Place of Refuge.” But I
retract the Expression. One Place there is, which
will prove an inviolable Sanctuary, and a perfect
Security. I mean, the great, the gracious, the
adorable REDEEMER’s Righteousness. Hi-
ther let Us betake ourselves. Now, before the
Day of Desolation cometh, now let us betake Our-
selves to *this Strong-hold*. Then, shall We have no
Reason to fear, though the Earth be moved, and
though the Hills be carried into the Midst of the Sea.
For thus saith GOD, the omnipotent and faithful
GOD ; *The Sun and the Moon shall be darkened, and
the Stars shall withdraw their Shining. The LORD
also, amidst this deep and dismal Gloom, shall roar out
of Sion ; and utter his Voice, laden with Horror and
prophetic Destruction, from Jerusalem. The Heavens
above, and the Earth beneath, and all created Nature,
shall shake.* But the true Believer may stand erect
and undismayed. Because *the LORD*, who dwells
in the Darkness, and presides over the Storm ; the
LORD JESUS Himself *will be the Hope of
his People*, to inspire them with a noble Confidence ;
and the Strength of his Children †, to be their Safe-
guard in every Danger.

Or, if the true Believer is involved, in the same
promiscuous Ruin with the Ungodly ; even this
shall turn to his Gain. It shall exempt Him from
the lingering Pains, and the melancholy Solemnities

* Amos v. 19.

† Joel iii. 15, 16.

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ties of a dying Bed. Like *Elijah's* fiery Chariot, it shall waft his Soul, with Speed and Safety, to the Bosom of his S A V I O U R. While the hideous Cavern, that whelms his Body in the Center, shall be its Chamber of Rest, till the beloved BRIDE-GROOM comes, and the Day of Resurrection dawns.

We lift up our Eyes, and behold the radiant Colours, which flush the Forehead of the Morning. We turn, and gaze upon the no less beautiful Tinges, which impurple the Brow of Evening. We throw around our View, and are delighted with numberless Forms of Fertility, which both decorate and enrich our Plains.—Whereas, other Countries are darkened with Clouds, or over-run with Swarms of *Locusts*. Which intercept, where-ever they fly, the fair Face of Day; and destroy, where-ever they alight, the green Treasures of the Ground*.

Ah!

* Fearful and astonishing is the Account, which Travellers have given Us, with relation to these Animals. *Thavenot* informs Us; “That they fly in the Air together, all compact, like a vast Cloud; sometimes fifteen or eighteen Miles long, and about ten or twelve Miles broad. So that they quite darken the Sky, and make the brightest Day obscure. Wherever they light, they devour all the Corn in less than two Hours, and frequently make a Famine in the Country.”

Their Names, in the sacred Language, are most exactly significant of their two distinguishing Properties. *אֲרָבָה* denotes an exceeding great, a numberless *Multitude*. *לֶקֶט* signifies to make clean and bare; as when some hungry Animal, has both devoured the Flesh, and licked the Bone.—Adored be the divine Providence! That We learn the Character of these hideous Insects, not from sorrowful Experience, but only from harmless Narrative.

476 DIALOGUE XIX.

Ah ! what avails it, that the laborious Hind sows his Acres ; or the skilful Husbandman prunes his Vineyard ? That Spring, with her prolific Moisture, swells the Bud ; or, with her delicate Pencil, paints the Blossom ? Nor Grain, nor Fruit, can hope for Maturity ; while these *rapacious* and *baleful* Creatures infest the Neighbourhood. They ravage the Gardens, and plunder the Fields. They strip the Trees, and shave the Meadows. Scarce a single Leaf remains on the Boughs, or so much as a single Stalk in the Furrows. *A Fire devoureth before them, and behind them a Flame burneth : the Land is as the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate Wilderness : yea, and nothing can escape them **.

Now, let the dreadful Artillery roar from all its iron Throats, and disgorge the heaviest Glut of mortal Hail. Now, Ye Sons of Slaughter ; Men *skilful to destroy* † ; now hurl the sulphureous Globes, which kindle into a Hurricane of Fire, and burst in ragged Instruments of Ruin.—To no Purpose. The linked Thunderbolts are turned into Stubble ; the bursting Bombs are accounted as Straw. These Armies of the Air, laugh at all the formidable Preparations of War : *and when they fall on the Sword,*
they

* *A Fire devoureth before them, and behind them a Flame burneth*, Joel ii. 3. This is one of those *bold* and *expressive* Metaphors, in which the Hebrew Language delights, and by which it is eminently distinguished. It signifies a *total Devastation* of the vegetable Produce. Such as must ensue, if a raging and resistless Fire attended the Progress of these pernicious Animals : burning with such vehement Impetuosity, that None could quench it ; spreading such extensive Havock, that nothing could escape it.

† Ezek. xxi. 31.

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they shall not be wounded *.—Surprising and awful Destination of the everlasting GOD! At once, to stain the Pride, and chastise the Guilt of Man! These are a despicable and puny Race; clad in no Coat of Mail, but crushed by the slightest Touch. They wear neither Sword, nor Scymetar, nor any offensive Weapon. Yet, in spite of opposing Legions, they carry on their Depredations, and push their Conquests. *Terror* marches in their Front, and *Famine* brings up the Rear. They spread universal Devastation, as they advance; and frequently give the Signal, for the Pestilence to follow. Potent Armies lose their Hands, and haughty Tyrants tremble for their Dominions.

O! that the Natives of *Great-Britain* would be-think themselves! Would break off their Sins by beleiving in the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, and their Iniquities by cherishing the Influences of his Divine SPIRIT! Lest this *overflowing Scourge*,

* The Prophet *Joel*, foretelling the Plague of *Locusts*, gives, under the Image of an *embattled Host*, a most alarming Display, of their terrible Appearance; their impetuous Progress; the horrible Dread they raise, as they advance; and the irreparable Mischief they leave, as they depart. Adding, among other amazing Circumstances, *When they fall upon the Sword, they should not be wounded*. Which implies, I apprehend, that no Method of Slaughter should prove destructive to their Troops; or, that every Expedient, contrived for their Suppression, should be utterly baffled. Being, through their immense Numbers as *invincible*, as if every one was absolutely *invulnerable*. For, though Millions and Millions should perish, by the Weapons of War; even such a Blow, in reference to their whole *collective* Body, should scarce be perceived as a Loss, scarce be felt as a Wound; neither diminishing their Strength, nor retarding their March. *Joel* ii. 8.

Scourge *, under which some neighbouring Kingdoms have severely smarted, should be commissioned to visit *our* Borders, and avenge the Quarrel of its M A K E R's Honour.—Distant as those countless Legions are; though separated from Us by interposing Seas; yet, if G O D lift up a Standard from far, or but his † unto them from the

* שופר *Overflowing Scourge*, Isai. xxviii. 15. It is the Property of a Scourge to *lash*, of a River to *overflow*. The sacred Writer (by a most elegant *Alliteration*, which beautifies the Original, but cannot be preserved in the Translation) has connected these different Ideas and different Effects. The vindictive Visitation, with which He threatens the disobedient *Jews*, shall *pierce deep* as a Scourge, and *spread wide* as an Inundation. They shall feel it in all their Interests, and feel it at their very Soul. It shall involve the whole Nation in Misery, Anguish, and Ruin.

There seems to be such a Form of Expression in the Service of our Church. When We pray, in behalf of our Fellow-Christians; “*pour upon them the continual Dew of thy Blessing.*” That which may be refreshing and salutary as the Dew, yet copious and abundant as the Shower.

† *His unto them*, Isai. v. 26. With great Significancy, and peculiar Grandeur, the Prophet applies this Expression to the L O R D G O D of Hosts, influencing the most powerful Armies, *q. d.* “They come, without a Moment's Delay, and, from the remotest Regions of the Earth, to execute all his Pleasure. Formidable and innumerable as they are, they come—I say not, upon his repeated Injunctions, or at his strict Command—but at the first, the very *smallest* Intimation of his Will.”—Such as the Shepherds used to their Flocks; such as the Bee-men, of old, to their Swarms; or such as We, in these Days, to some of our domestic Animals.—The Hebrew שרר I would not translate, *At his Whistle*; because this Phrase, in our Language, creates a vulgar Sound, and conveys a low Idea: but such

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the Ends of the Earth; *they come with Speed swiftly.*
—Who will convey my Wish to the Ears, who will transmit it to the Hearts, of my Countrymen? That our Land may always appear, as it does at present, like the Darling of Providence. May always resound with the Voice of Joy, and be filled with the Fruits of Plenty. May always wear the Robe of Beauty, and be adorned with the Smile of Peace.

How great are the Advantages of *Peace*! said *Theron*. Peace at her Leisure plans, and leads out Industry to execute, all the noble and commodious Improvements, which We behold on every Side. Peace sets the Mark of Property on our Possessions, and bids Justice guarantee them to our Enjoyment. Peace spreads over Us the Banner of the Laws, while We taste, free from Outrage, and secure from Injury, the Milk and Honey of our honest Toil *.—Amidst the tumultuous Confusions of
War,

such is the Import of the Original. Which denotes all that *unconcerned Ease* of Action, without any of the *offensive Familiarity* of Diction.

* *Pax optima Rerum*, says the *Latin Poet*.—But the *Oriental*s, I think, discover the most superlative Esteem for this Blessing, by making it the constant Form of their Salutations, and the Subject of their most cordial Wishes for their Friends; PEACE BE UNTO THEE.—In this *short Sentence*, they seem to have comprised a *whole Volume* of Mercies: meaning, by their single שָׁלוֹם all that the *Greeks* expressed by their *χαρις υγιαινον, ευφραντων*; i. e. A Confluence of that Joy of Mind, that Health of Body, that Prosperity of outward Circumstances, which *complete* the Happiness of Mankind.

We have a fine Description of Peace, and its various Blessings, 1. *Maccab.* xiv. 8, 9, &c. The Picture is
very

War, who could have a Heart to contrive, or a Hand to accomplish, any such Works of Dignity and Use? In those Days of Darkness and Distraction, how languid to the Sight are all the dewy Landscapes of Spring? How insipid to the Taste are all the delicious Flavours of Autumn?—When the Nation is over-run with Armies, and embroiled in Slaughter, *a trembling Heart, and Failing of Eyes, and Sorrow of Mind* *, are the dismal Distinction of the Times. Instead of a calm Acquiescence in our Portion, our very Life hangs in continual Suspense.

But what are all the Benefits of *external Peace*, though displayed in the fairest Light, and enlivened by the strongest Contrasts—What are they all, compared with the Blessings of the Gospel? By which Sinners may have *Peace with GOD through JESUS CHRIST our LORD*.

This, resumed *Aspasio*, suggests a fresh Instance of Happiness, which others want, and *We* possess; an Instance, never to be omitted in our Catalogue of peculiar Mercies. I might add, never to be forgotten, by any *Christian*, on any Occasion.—While many Kingdoms of the Earth, are ignorant of the true GOD, and know neither the Principles of Piety, nor the Paths of Felicity; *the Day-spring from on high hath visited Us, to give the Knowledge of Salvation, and to guide our Feet into the Way of Peace*.

very exact, though perfectly artless. Nothing hinders me from transcribing the Passage, but a Fear of being too *diffusive* in my Notes. Left the Reader, who expects a *Treat*, should complain of a *Glut*: or have Reason to object, that the Side-board is more copiously furnished than the Table. Ως μὴ το καρεῖον τὸ ἐπὶ γαστρίαι μῶζον.

* Deut. xxviii. 65.

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DIALOGUE XIX. 481

Peace.—While Millions of *rebellious Angels*, cast from their native Thrones, are reserved in Chains of Darkness, unto the Judgment of the great Day; We, though rebellious and apostate Sinners of Mankind, are delivered from the Wrath to come. The holy *JESUS* (blessed be his redeeming Goodness!) has endured the Cross, and despised the Shame, on purpose to rescue Us from those doleful and ignominious Dungeons; where the Prisoners of Almighty Vengeance

—————*Converse with Groans,
Unrespited, unpitied, unrepriev'd,
Ages of hopeless End*.*

Yes, my dear *Theron*; let me repeat your own important Words; “What are all the Benefits of
“external Peace, though displayed in the fairest
“Light, and invivified by the strongest Con-
“trasts—What are they all, compared with the
“*Blessings* of the *Gospel*?”—This brings the Olive-branch from Heaven, and proclaims Reconciliation with our offended *GOD*. This composes the Tumults of the Mind, and the Troubles of Conscience. This disarms the warring Passions, regulates the extravagant Desires. In a Word; this spreads such a Beauty of Holiness, through the whole personal and social Conduct, as is far more amiable, than the most engaging Forms of material Nature.

O! that Thou wouldest bow the Heavens!
That Thou wouldest come down, *celestial VISI-
TANT*; and make thy stated, thy favourite Abode
In our Isle! That every Individual may be ani-

VOL. III.

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mated

* MILTON.

mated with thy Power; and every Community wear thy resplendent Badge!—Then shall it be the *least* Ingredient of our public Felicity, That the Sword of Slaughter is beaten into a Plough-share, and the once bloody Spear bent into a Pruning-hook. It shall be the *lowest* upon the List of our common Blessings, That *Violence is no more heard in our Land, Wasting and Destruction within our Borders. Our very Officers will be Peace, and our Exactors * Righteousness. We shall call* (and the Event will correspond with the Name) *our Walls Salvation, and our Gates Praise.* Then shall every Harp be taken down from the Willows, and every Voice burst into a Song.—“In other Climes”—will be the general Acclamation—

“In other Climes, let Myriads of curious *Insects*;
 “spin that delicate Thread, which softens into
 “Velvet, stiffens into Brocade, or flows in glossy
 “Sattin; which reflects a lovelier Glow on the
 “Cheek of Beauty, and renders Royalty itself
 “more

* Isai. lx. 17. *Officers* and *Exactors* signify Persons, vested with public Authority: who have it in their Power, to rule with Rigour. But these, instead of abusing their Power, shall conduct the Administration with all possible Equity and Gentleness; with a *parental* Tenderness, rather than a *magisterial* Austerity. Though the Title and Office of an Exactor may remain; nothing of the domineering Insolence, or oppressive Severity, shall continue.—The Prophet, who always delivers his Sentiments with the utmost Emphasis, says; They shall be, not barely *peaceable* and *righteous*, but possessed of these Qualities in the highest Degree. Or, which implies more, than any other Words can express, They shall be *Peace* and *Righteousness* itself.—The same beautiful Figure is used in the next Clause, which describes the inviolable *Security* of the City, together with the universal *Joy* and *Piety* of the Inhabitants.

“ more majestic. We are presented with infinitely *finer Robes*, in the imputed Righteousness of our REDEEMER, and the inherent Sanctification of his SPIRIT. Which beautify the very Soul, and prepare it for the illustrious Assembly—of Saints in Light—of Angels in Glory.

“ Let eastern Rocks sparkle with Diamonds, and give Birth to Gems of every dazzling Tincture. We have, hid in the Field of our Scriptures, the *Pearl* of great Price; the *white* and precious *Stone** of perfect Absolution; a Diadem, which will shine with undiminished Lustre, when all the brilliant Wonders of the Mine are faded, extinguished, lost.

“ Let richer Soils nourish the noblest Plants, and warmer Suns concoct their exquisite Juices; the Lemon, pleasingly poignant; the Citron, more mildly delicious; or that Pride of vegetable Life, and Compendium of all the Blandishments of Taste, the Pine-apple. We enjoy far more exalted Dainties, in having Access to the *Tree of Life*; whose Leaves are for the Healing of the Nations †; whose Boughs are replenished with a never-failing Abundance of heavenly Fruits; and the Nutriment they dispense, is Bliss and Immortality.

“ Let *Iberian* Vines swell the translucent Cluster, and burst into a Flood of generous Wine. Let the *Tuscan* Olive extract the Fatness of the Earth, and melt into a soft mellifluous Stream. We shall neither envy, nor covet these inferior Gifts,

H h 2

“ 10

* Rev. ii. 17.

† Rev. xxii. 2.

“ the Banks of those stately Rivers, are at a Dis-
 “ tance from all the Springs of true Consolation.
 “ Whereas, We have a Fountain, We have a
 “ River, that issues from the Ocean of eternal
 “ Love. With incomparable Dignity, and with
 “ equal Propriety, it is styled *The River of Life* *.
 “ It visits the House of the Mourner, and revives
 “ the Spirit of the Sorrowful. It makes glad the
 “ City, and makes happy the Servants of our
 “ GOD. It quickens even the Dead; and every
 “ human Creature, that drinks of its Water, lives
 “ for ever.

“ Let *Asiatic* Islands boast their Mountains of
 “ Myrrh, and Hills of Frankincense. Let *Ara-*
 “ *bian* Groves, with superior Liberality, distil
 “ their healing Gums; and ripen, for vigorous
 “ Operation, their vital Drugs. We have a *more*
 “ *sovereign* Remedy, than their most powerful Re-
 “ storatives, in the great MEDIATOR’s aton-
 “ ing Blood. We have a *more refreshing* Banquet,
 “ than all their mingled Sweets, in commemorat-
 “ ing his Passion, and participating his Merits.

H h 3 “ In

River in the World. Rather like a Sea, than a River,
 it deserves, incomparably more than *Timæus*, *Virgil’s*
 grand Description;

————— *Vasto cum Murmure Montis*
It Mare proruptum, & Pelago premit Arva sonanti.

To conceive a proper Idea of its prodigious Dimensions,
 We may imagine a Current of Waters, taking its rise
 beyond *Jerusalem*; and, after having received all the
 Rivers of *Europe* into its capacious Bed, making its En-
 try on the *British* Ocean, by a Mouth extended from
Dover to *Bristol*.

486 DIALOGUE XIX.

“ In short ; We have an Equivalent, far more
 “ than an Equivalent, for all those choice Produc-
 “ tions, which bloom in the Gardens, or bask in
 “ the Orchards of the Sun. We have a Gospel,
 “ rich in precious Privileges, and abounding with
 “ inestimable Promises : We have a SAVIOUR,
 “ full of *forgiving Goodness*, and liberal of *renewing*
 “ *Grace*. At whose auspicious Approach, Foun-
 “ tains spout amidst the burning Desert ; under
 “ whose welcome Footsteps, the sandy Waste
 “ smiles with Herbage ; and beneath his potent
 “ Touch, *The Wilderness buds and blossoms as a*
 “ *Rose* *. Or, to speak plainly, the desolate and
 “ barren Soul brings forth those Fruits of the
 “ SPIRIT, which are infinitely more ornamen-
 “ tal, than the filken Gems of Spring ; infinitely
 “ more beneficial, than the salubrious Stores of
 “ Autumn.

“ We have a SAVIOUR—Tell it out among
 “ the Heathen ; that all the Nations on Earth, may
 “ partake of the Gift, and join in the Song—A
 “ SAVIOUR We have, whose radiant Eye
 “ brightens the gloomy Paths of Affliction. Whose
 “ efficacious Blessing makes *all Things work together*,
 “ *for the Good* † of his People. Death, gilded by
 “ his propitious Smile, even Death itself looks
 “ gay. Nor is the Grave, under his benign Ad-
 “ ministration, any longer a Den of Destruction ;
 “ but a short and shady Avenue to those immortal
 “ Mansions ; whose *Foundations are laid with Sap-*
 “ *phires* ; whose *Windows are of Agate* ; the *Gates of*
 “ *Carbuncle* ; and *all the Borders of pleasant Stones* ‡.”

Pardon

* Isai. xxxv. 1. † Rom. viii. 28. ‡ Isai. liv. 11, 12.

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Pardon my Rhapsody, dear *Theron*. Your own Remark, added to the grand and lovely Views, have warmed, have animated, have almost transported me.—*Theron* answered not a Word: but sat fixed in Thought.—While He is indulging his Contemplation, We may just observe some other Peculiarities of the Prospect.

Here and there, a lonesome *Cottage* scarcely lifts its humble Head. No pompous Swell of projecting Steps, surrounds the Door: no appendent Wings of inferior Offices, skirt the Edifice: no stately Hall, flabbed with Marble, and roofed with Sculpture, receives the gazing Stranger. But white-robed Innocence, and sweet-featured Contentment, Neatness* with a Gloss on her Garments, and Health, with a Bloom in her Cheeks, adorn the Habitation. While Virtue lends her Graces, and Religion com-

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municates

* *Neatness*—To exemplify and recommend this Ornament of social Life, is, perhaps, the Design of a Passage, which I have never seen satisfactorily explained. When our LORD gave a Treat to five thousand Men, who attended his Preaching; when He commanded them to sit down upon the Ground, in order to receive his Bounty in the most commodious Manner; it is added by the sacred Historian, *There was much Grass in the Place* *. Why is this Circumstance particularly remarked? To denote the *Decorum* of the Transaction; and to be, as I imagine, both an Example and a Recommendation of *Neatness*. The Seats, though very plain and simple, were far from being sordid or slovenly. It was not a dirty Place, or a dusty Spot, but covered with the Carpets of Nature. Which rendered it as cleanly, if not so sumptuous, as the Sofas of *Turky*; or “the Beds of Gold and Silver,” used at the Feast of King *Abasuerus* †.

* *John* vi. 10.

† *Esther* i. 6.

municates her Honours, to dignify the Abode : rendering the blameless Hutt superior, in *real* Majesty, to a dissolute Court.

At some Distance, appear the hoary Remains of an antient *Monastery*. Sunk beneath the Weight of revolving Years, the once venerable Fabric is leveled with the Dust. The lofty and ornamented Temple, lies rudely over-grown with Moss, or still more ignobly covered with Weeds. The Walls, where sainted Imagery stood, or *idolized* Painting shone, are clasped with twining Ivy, or smagged with horrid Thorn.—Through Isles, that once echoed to the Chantor's Voice, mingled with the Organ's majestic Sound, the hollow Winds roar, and the dashing Storm drives. Where are, now, the silent Cells, the vocal Choirs, the dusky Groves ? In which the *romantic* Saints prolonged their lonely Vigils, by the midnight Taper ; or poured their united Prayers, before the Lark had waked the Morn ; or strolled, in ever-musing Melancholy, along the Moon-light Glade.—Surely, those mouldering Fragments now teach, (and with a much better Grace, with a much stronger Emphasis) what formerly their unsocial and gloomy Residentiaries professed. They teach the *Vanity* of the World, and the *transitory* Duration of all that is reckoned stable, in this Region of Shadows.

Behold, on yonder Eminence, the rueful Memorials of a magnificent *Castle*. All dismantled, and quite demolished, it gives a Shading of Solemnity to the more lively Parts of Nature's Picture ; and attempers the rural Delight, with some Touches of alarming Dread.—*War*, destructive *War*, has snatched the Scythe from the Hand of Time, and

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hurried on the Steps of Destiny. Those broken Columns, and shattered Walls; those prostrate Towers, and Battlements dashed to the Ground; carry evident Marks of an immature Downfal. They were built for Ages, and for Ages might have stood, a Defence and Accommodation to Generations yet unborn; if haply they had escaped the dire Assaults of hostile Rage.—But, what Vigilance of Man, can prevent the Miner's dark Approach? Or what Solidity of Bulwark, can withstand the bellowing Engine's impetuous Shock?

Those, perhaps, were the Rooms, in which *licentious* Mirth crowned with Roses the sparkling Bowl, and tuned to the silver-sounding Lute the Syren's enchanting Song. Those, the Scenes of voluptuous Indulgence, where Luxury poured her Delicacies: where Beauty, insidious Beauty, practised her Wiles; and spread, with bewitching Art, her wanton Snares.—Now instead of the riotous Banquet, and Intrigues of lawless Love, the Owl utters her hated Screams by Night, and the Raven flaps her ominous Wing by Day.—Where are the Violet-couches, and the Woodbine-bowers; which fanned, with their breathing Sweets, the polluted Flame? The Soil seems to suffer for the Abuses of the Owner. Blasted and dishonoured, it produces nothing but ragged Briars, and noisome Nettles; under whose odious Covert, the hissing Snake glides, or the croaking Toad crawls.—Fearful Intimation of that *ignominious* and *doleful* Catastrophe, which awaits the Sons of Riot! When their momentary Gratifications will drop, like the faded Leaf; and leave nothing behind, but Pangs of Remorse,

morfe, keener far than the pointed Thorn, and more envenomed than the Viper's Tooth.

Perhaps, they were the beauteous, and honoured Abodes, where *Grandeur* and *Politeness* walked their daily Round, attended with a Train of guiltless Delights. Where amiable and refined *Friendship* was wont to sit and smile; looking Love, and talking the very Soul. Where Hospitality, with Oeconomy always at her Side, stood beckoning to the *distressed*, but *industrious* * Poor; and shower-

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* I say distressed, but *industrious* Poor—Because, I would not be understood, as encouraging, in any Degree, the Relief of our *common Beggars*.—Towards the former, I would cultivate a tender and ever-yearning Compassion; I would anticipate their Complaints; and, as a sacred Writer directs, would even *seek to do them Good*.—But as to the latter, I frankly own, that I look upon it as my Duty, to discourage such Cumberers of the Ground. They are, generally speaking, lusty Drones; and their habitual *Begging*, is no better than a specious *Robbing* of the public Hive. For such *sturdy Supplicants*, who are able to undergo the Fatigue of *Traveling*; able to endure the Inclemencies of the Weather; and consequently much more able, were they equally willing, to exercise themselves in some Species of laudable Industry—For these, the *House of Correction* would be a far more salutary Provision, than any Supply from our Table; and *Confinement to Labour*, a much more beneficial Charity, than the Liberality of the Purse.

We should remember, and *they* should be taught, that the Law ordained by the Court of Heaven, is, *If a Man will not work, neither shall He eat*. If then We contribute to support them in Idleness, do We not *counteract* and frustrate this wise Regulation, established by the great SOVEREIGN of the Universe?—Is it not also a *Wrong* to the deserving Poor, if We suffer these Wens on the Body politic to draw off the Nourishment,

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DIALOGUE XIX. 491

ed Blessings from her liberal Hand.—But War, detested War, has stretched over the social and inviting

which ought to circulate amongst the valuable and useful Members?—Money or Victuals bestowed on these worthless Wretches, is not real Beneficence, but the *Earnest-penny* of Sloth. It hires them, to be good for nothing; and pays them, for being public Nuisances.

Let Us then unanimously join, to shake off these *dead Weights* from our Wheels, and dislodge these *Swarms of Vermin* from our State. Let Us be deaf to their most importunate Clamours; and assure Ourselves, that, by this determined Inflexibility, We do *GOD*, We do our *Community*, We do *them*, the most substantial Service.—Should they implore by the *injured* Name of *JESUS*; for the Honour of the *LORD JESUS*, let Us resolutely with-hold our Alms. Their Meaning is,—
 “ I cannot go on, in my present shameful and iniquitous Course; I can no longer continue to act the *wicked and slothful Servant*; unless You will administer some kindly—pernicious Assistance. For *CHRIST*’s sake, therefore, assist me to dishonour my Christian Name, and to live more base than the Beasts that perish. For *CHRIST*’s sake, help me to be the Reproach and the Burthen of my native Country; and to persist in the Way, which leads to eternal Destruction.”—This is the *true Import* of their Petitions. And, whether the Sanction of that most venerable Name, added to *such* a Request, should move our Commiseration, or excite our Abhorrence, let every thinking Person judge.

I trust, the Reader will be so candid, as to excuse this long digressive Note; and do me the Justice to believe, That I am not pleading against, but for the *real* Poor: not to *harden* any One’s Heart, but rather to *direct* every One’s Hand.—Give, out of Gratitude to *CHRIST*, out of Compassion to the Needy, and be for ever blessed. But give not to incorrigible Vagrants; to maintain Impiety, and pamper Indolence; lest it be demanded, one Day, *Who hath required this at your Hand?* Lest, by supporting dissolute Creatures in that abandon-

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viting Seat, *the Line of Confusion, and the Stones of Emptiness* *. Now, alas! nothing but Desolation and Horror haunt the savage Retreat. The ample Arches of the Bridge, which so often transmitted the wondering Passenger along their penile Way, lie buried in the dreary Moat.—Those Relics of the massy Portals, naked and abandoned, seem to bemoan their melancholy Condition. No splendid Chariots, with their gay Retinue, frequent solitary Avenues. No needy Steps, with chearful Expectations, besiege the once bountiful Gate. But all is a miserable, forlorn, hideous Pile of Rubbish.

Since Riches so often take to themselves Wings, and fly away: since Houses, great and fair, reel upon their Foundations, and so soon tumble into Dust: how wise, how salutary, is our divine MASTER's Advice! *Make to yourselves Friends with the Mammon of Unrighteousness; that, when the World fails around You, when the Springs of Nature fail within you; they, as Witnesses of your Charity, and Vouchers for the Sincerity of your Faith, may receive You into everlasting Habitations* †. —This is to lay up Treasure for Ourselves ‡. Whereas, whatever else We amass, is for our Heirs, for our Successors, for We know not Who. This Wealth is truly emphatically called *our own* ||: it is an Advowson; We have the Perpetuity. Whereas, whatever else We possess, is ours only for a Turn or in Trust.

See

ed Sloth, which is the Nurse of all Vice, We become Partakers of their Guilt, and accessary to their Ruin.

* Isai. xxxiv. 11. † Luke xvi. 9. ‡ Matt. vi. 20. || Luke xvi. 12.

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See the dreadful, dreadful Ravages of *civil Discord*! Where-ever that infernal Fury stalks, She marks her Steps in Blood, and leaves opulent Cities a ruinous Heap*.—What Thanks then, what ardent

* The Effects of what *Virgil* calls *Bella, horrida Bella*, were never displayed in Colours that glow, and with Figures that alarm, like those which are used by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. iv. 19, &c. As this is, perhaps, the greatest Master-piece of the Kind, the Reader will permit me to enrich the Notes, with a Transcript of the Passage.

First We see, or rather We feel, the Effects of War on the human Mind; the keenest Anguish, the deepest Dismay, and the wildest Amazement. All expressed in a Language, exactly suiting the Subject—vehement—abrupt—disorderly. *My Bowels! My Bowels! I am pained at my very Heart. My very Heart maketh a Noise in me; I cannot hold my Peace: because Thou hast heard, O my Soul, the Sound of the Trumpet, the Alarm of War.—Destruction upon Destruction is cried; for the Land is spoiled. Suddenly are my Tents spoiled, and my Curtains in a Moment.—How long shall I see the Standard, and hear the Sound of the Trumpet?*

Then We see the dismal Devastations of War; and who does not shudder at the Sight? The whole Country laid in Ruins! Deprived of all its Ornaments, and all its Inhabitants! nothing but Confusion and Emptiness. Reduced to a Solitude, and a Chaos. *I beheld the Earth, and lo! and lo it was without Form and void: and the Heavens, and they had no light.—I beheld the Mountains, and lo! they trembled, and all the Hills moved lightly.—I beheld, and lo! there was no Man, and all the Birds of the Heavens were fled.—I beheld, and lo! the fruitful Place was a Wilderness, and all the Cities thereof were broken down, at the Presence of the LORD, and by his fierce Anger.*

If, after all this Profusion of Imagery, bold and animated even to Astonishment, We can have any Relish for the cold Chrestness of a *heathen* Genius, We may find

dent and ceaseless Thanks, are due to that all-superintending, ever gracious LORD, who has dashed the Torch from her Hand; has broke her murderous Weapons; and driven the baleful Pest from our *Island*!—May the same almighty Goodness banish the Monster from all Lands! Banish the accursed Monster, with her hated Associate Rapine, and her insatiable Purveyor Ambition, to the deepest, deepest Hell. Branded with everlasting Infamy, and bound in adamantine Chains, *there* let them gnash their Teeth, and bite the inevitable Curb!—While *Peace*, descending from her native Heaven, bids her Olives spring amidst the joyful Nations: and *Plenty*, in League with Commerce, scatters Blessings from Clime to Clime. While *Gladness* smiles in every Eye; and *Love*, extensive disinterested Love, leveling the Partition-wall of Bigotry, cements every Heart in the best of Bonds.

Near those Heaps of Havock, lies the Spot, ever-memorable and still revered, on which an obstinate and fatal Battle was fought.—The Husbandman, as He breaks his fallow Land, or rends the grassy Turf, often discovers the horrid Implements, and the more horrid Effects, of that bloody Conflict. He starts, to hear his Coulter strike upon the Bosses of a rusty Buckler, or gride over the
Edge

find something of the same Nature, in *Horace* Lib. II. Od. 1.

Jam nunc minaci, &c.

Which, though one of his most spirited and sublime Passages, is, if compared with the Fire, the Grandeur, the majestic Wildness and Horror of the Prophet, like a Land-Flood compared with the universal Deluge.

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Edge of a blunted Sword. He turns pale, to see human Bones thrown up before his Plough; and stands aghast to think, that, in cutting his *Furrow*, He opens a *Grave*.—The grey-headed Sire often relates to his Grandsons, hanging with eager Attention on the Tale, and trembling for the Event; relates the dismal, the glorious Deeds of that important Day.—How the Fields, now covered with waving Crops, were then loaded with mangled and ghastly Corpses. How the Pastures, now green with Herbage, were then incrimsoned with human Gore.

“ On *that* extended Common, He says, where
 “ the busy Shepherd is erecting his hurdled Citadel,
 “ the Tents were spread, and the Banners display-
 “ ed; the Spears bristled in Air, and the burnished
 “ Helmets glittered to the Sun.—On *yonder* rising
 “ Ground, where the frisking Lambs play their
 “ harmless Frolics, stood the martial Files; clad
 “ in Mail, and ranged in Battle-array. There
 “ stood War, with all its collected Horrors; ho-
 “ vering, like some portentous Cloud, and ready
 “ to burst into an immediate Storm.—On the
 “ *nearer* Plain, where the quiet Steed grazes in
 “ Safety, and those sober Oxen chew the juicy
 “ Herb, the fierce Encounter mixed. There, the
 “ Javelins, launched from nervous Arms, and
 “ aimed by vengeful Eyes, flew and reflew, whiz-
 “ zing with Death. The Arrows lightened*
 “ from

* *Habak. iii. 11.* בֶּרֶק הַנִּיֶּתֶר literally translated, presents Us with that beautiful bold Figure, *The Lightning of thy Spear*.—Which, with innumerable other Graces of Speech, that give Dignity and Spirit to our modern
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“ from the Strings ; and drenched their keen
 “ Points, and dipped their feathery Wings in
 “ Blood.—Soon as this Shower, of missive Steel
 “ ceased, instantly outsprung Thousands of flami-
 “ ing Swords. They clash on the brazen Shields ;
 “ they cut their Way through the reeking Armour ;
 “ and sheath their Blades in many a gallant daunt-
 “ less Heart.—Here, on this distinguished Level,
 “ the proud insulting Foe, presuming on Victory,
 “ and boasting of their Numbers, poured in like a
 “ Flood. There, a bold determined Battalion, of
 “ which myself was a Part, planted themselves like
 “ a Rock, and broke the fierce Attack.

“ Then adds the brave old Warrior, then the
 “ coward Herd fled before the Vengeance of our
 “ conquering Arms. Then, these Hands strewed
 “ the Plains with a Harvest, different far from their
 “ present Productions. Then, *the Fathers*, smit-
 “ ten with inexpressible Dread, *looked not back on*
 “ *their Children* * ; though shuddering at the lifted
 “ Spear,

Compositions, are borrowed from the Language of *Sion* ;
 are transplanted from the School of the Prophets.—If
 We start into a pleasing Amazement, at *Homer's* δορυ
 μανίας ; have We not equal Reason to be charmed and
 surprised at *Nabum's* יתחוללו הרכב ? Every Chariot
 raged with Violence and Impetuosity ; was eager, was
 even mad to destroy. *Nab. ii. 5.* *Milton* has evidently
 lighted his Torch at the Prophet's Flame.

—————*The madding Wheels*
Of brazen Chariots raged.

B. VI.

* For this very striking, and most terrific Image, We
 are obliged to the Prophet *Jeremiah*. Who, in a few
 Words, but with all the Pomp of Horror, describes the
 Din of approaching War, and the Consternation of a
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“Spear, or screaming under the brandished Sword.
 “*The Fathers looked not back on their Children, though*
 “they fell among the Slain, gashed with deadly
 “Wounds; or lay expiring, in Groans of Agony,
 “under our Feet.”

We leave the Warrior, to repeat his shocking Story, and enjoy his savage Satisfaction. He speaks, 'tis true, in a Strain somewhat superior to his Character. As though the Triumph of his
 VOL. III. I i Heart,

vanquished People. *At the Noise of the Stamping of the Hoofs of his strong Horses, at the Rushing of his Chariots, and at the Rumbling of his Wheels, the Fathers shall not look back unto their Children, for Feebleness of Hands.* Jerem. xlviii. 3.

Not to mention the Thunder-like Sound of the Diction; and that in a Language much less sonorous than the Original; I appeal to every Reader, Whether the last Circumstance does not awaken the Idea of so tremendous a Scene, and so horrible a Dread, as no Words can express. *Virgil* has imitated the Prophet's Manner, in that very delicate descriptive Touch; where, representing the prodigious Alarm, excited by the Yell of the infernal Fury, He says;

Et trepidæ Matres pressere ad Pectora Natos.

That is, *Each frightened Mother clasped the Infant to her fluttering Bosom.*

No One, I believe, need be informed, that the Panic is painted, with a very superior Energy, by the Poet of Heaven. In the *Pagan's* Draught, the Effect of Fear results from the Constitution, and coincides with the Bias of Humanity. Whereas, in the *Prophet's* Picture, it counter-acts, it suspends, it entirely over-bears, the tenderest Workings and strongest Propensities of Nature; though instigated, on one hand, by the most importunate Calls of exquisite Distress; and stimulated, on the other, by all the Solicitations of the most yearning Compassion.

498 DIALOGUE XIX.

Heart, had exalted his Sentiments, and ennobled his Language. Nevertheless, for calmer Scenes, and softer Delights, We willingly leave him.

The Eye is pleased with the elegant Gaiety of the Parterre; the Ear is soothed with the warbling Melody of the Grove; but *grand* Objects, and the *Magnificence* of Things, charm and transport the whole Man. The Mind, on such Occasions, seems to *expand* with the Prospect, and secretly exults in the Consciousness of her Greatness.—Intent upon these large and excursive Views, our Friends scarce advert to the minuter Beauties, which address them on every Side. The *Swan*, with her snowy Plumes, and loftily bending Head; amidst all her superb Air, and lordly State; rows unnoticed by.—Equally unnoticed is both the Array and the Action of the *Duck*; her glossy Neck, and finely chequered Wings; her diving into the Deep, or her darting up into Day.—The *Swallow*, skimming the Air in wanton Circles, or dipping her downy Breast in the Flood, courts their Observation in vain.—Nor could the *finny Shoals* attract their Regard, though they played before the Boat in sportive Chace; or, glancing quick to the Surface, shewed their pearly Coats, bedropped with Gold.—Thus they, engaged in sublime Speculations, neglect inferior Entertainments. And if the Sons of Religion over-look the *diminutive, transient, delusory* Forms of Pleasure, which float on the narrow Stream of Time, or slit along the scanty Bounds of Sense; it is only to contemplate and enjoy a Happiness in their GOD, which is *elevated, substantial, and immortal*. Compared with which, whatever the Eye can survey, from Pole to Pole,

Pole, from the rising to the setting Sun, is a Cockle-shell, a Butterfly, a Bubble.

From this open and enlarged Scene, they enter the Skirts of a vast, umbrageous, venerable *Forest*.— On either Side, the sturdy and gigantic Sons of Earth, rear their aged Trunks, and spread their branching Arms. Trees, of every hardy Make, and every majestic Form, in agreeable Disorder, and with a wild kind of Grandeur, fill the aerial Regions. The huge, expansive, roaming Boughs unite themselves over the Current, and diffuse “their Umbrage, broad and brown as Evening.”

*What solemn Twilight! What stupendous Shades
Enwrap these lonesome Floods? Thro’ every Nerve
A sacred Honour thrills, a pleasing Fear
Glides o’er the Mind.*

The timorous *Deer* start at the Clashing of the Waves. Alarmed with the unusual Sound, they look up, and gaze for a Moment: then fly into Covert, by various Ways, and with precipitate Speed; vanishing, rather than departing from the Glade.

How *awful* to reflect, as they steal along the shelving Shores, and the moss-grown Banks; as they glide under the pendent Shades of quivering Poplar, of whistling Fir, and the solemn-sounding Foliage of the Oak—how awful to reflect; “These
“were the lonely Haunts of the *Druids*, two thousand Years ago! Amidst these dusky Mazes, and
“sympathetic Glooms, the pensive Sages strayed.
“Here, they sought, they found, and with all the
“Solemnity of superstitious Devotion, they ga-

500 DIALOGUE XIX.

“thered their *Mistletoe* *. Here, the visionary Re-
 cluses shunned the tumultuous Ways of Men,
 “and traced the mysterious Paths of Providence.
 “Here they explored the Secrets of Nature, and
 “invoked their fabled Gods.”

Sometimes wrapt in a sudden Reverie of Thought,
 sometimes engaged in Conversation on the solemn
 Appearance of Things, the Voyagers scarce per-
 ceive their Progress. Before they are aware, this
 venerable Scene is lost; and they find themselves
 advanced upon the Borders of a *beautiful Lawn*.
 The Forest, retiring to the Right-hand, in the
 Shape of a Crescent, composed what *Milton* styles,
 “A verdurous Wall of stateliest Aspect;” and left,
 in the Midst, an ample Space for the Flourishing
 of Herbage.

Here, said *Theron*, if You please, We will alight;
 and leave the Bearer of our *floating Sedan*, to pursue
 his ceaseless Course—to enrich the Bosom of other
 Vallies, and lave the Feet of other Hills—to visit
 Cities, and make the Tour of Counties—to reflect
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* If the Reader pleases, He may see these pompous
 Solemnities described, in *VANIERII Præd. Rust.* pag.
 125, &c. Where, the curious Narrative of *Pliny*, is em-
 bellished with the harmonious Numbers of *Virgil*.—With
 regard to the Reflections, occasioned by this Account;
 the Compliments lavished on the *French*, their *Religion*,
 and their *Monarch*; I believe, the judicious *Protestant*
 will confess with me; that, as our charming Author has
 copied the Language, and entered into the Spirit of the
 Antients, He has also caught a Tincture of their Super-
 stition. Imbibing, together with *all* their Elegancies and
 Graces, *some* of their fanciful and legendary Levities.

*Verum ubi plura nitent in Carmine, non Ego paucis
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DIALOGUE XIX. 501

the Image of many a splendid Structure, which adorn his Banks; and, what is far more amiable, to distribute, all along his winding Journey, innumerable Conveniencies for Man and Beast: acquiring, the farther He goes, and the more Benefits He confers, a greater Depth, and a wider Swell; to the remarkable Confirmation of that beneficent Maxim, *There is that scattereth, yet increaseth* *;

— — — — — *And Good, the more
Communicated, more abundant proves.*

MILTON.

Theron and *Aspasio*, walking across the spacious Amphitheatre, seated themselves at the Extremity of the Bend. Before them, lay a verdant Area, quite even; perfectly handsome; but far from gay. *Green* was all the Dress, without any Mixture of gaudy Flowers, or glittering Colours. Only, now-and-then, a gentle Breeze, skimming over the undulating Mead, impressed a varying wavy Gloss on its Surface. The whole seemed to resemble the decent and sober Ornaments of *maturer Age*, when it has put off the Trappings, and bid adieu to the Levities of Youth.—The broad, transparent Stream, ran parallel with the Lips † of the Channel; and drew, as it were, a Line of Circumvallation, to guard the calm Retreat. The Water appeared, where shaded with Boughs, like a Barrier of polished Steel; where open to the Sun, like a Mirror

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* Prov. xi. 24.

† The *Greek*, which is above all Languages happy, in its beautiful Variety of *compound* Words, very neatly expresses this Appearance by—*ισοχελος τῇ γῇ*.

of flowing Crystal.—The eastern Edges of the River, were barricaded with a kind of mountainous Declivity. On whose rude and rocky Sides, a few stunted Shrubs and ill-formed Trees hung. Among which the timorous Rabbit burrowed, and the bearded Goat browsed.—Not far from the Summit, two or three Fountains gushed: which, uniting their Currents, as they trickled down the Steep, formed a natural *Cascade*. Here, it was lost in the rushy Dells, or obscured by the twisting Roots; there, it burst again into View, and playing full in the Eye of Day, looked like a Sheet of spouting Silver.

In this romantic Retirement, said *Theron*, We are quite sequestered from Society. We seem to be in a World of our own; and should almost be tempted to forget, that We are encompassed with a kindred Species; did not the *Music* of those silver-tongued *Bells*, poured from a distant Steeple, and gliding along the gentle Stream, bring Us News of human Kind.

Escaped from Man, and his busy Walks, 'methinks, We are come to the House of Tranquility. Such a deep, undisturbed Composure reigns all around!—It is as if some august Personage was making his Entrance, or some majestic Being was upon the Point to speak, and all Nature stood fixed in attentive Expectation. No Place better fitted to cherish, or to inspire, a *contemplative Sedateness*.

Awful Solitude! How pleasingly horrid is the Aspect of Things!—*Before Us*, are shaggy Rocks, and frowning Precipices, with broken Falls of Water, glittering through the Cliffs. Unwrought,

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DIALOGUE XIX. 503

hoary Grottoes, ancient as the Deluge! Yawning, gloomy Caverns, where Fancy shudders, as she enters!—*Around Us*, are “the Trees of the LORD.” Trees, which the Hand of the most HIGH hath planted, and which seem to be co-eval with the World. Who can forbear admiring their Simplicity and Grandeur; the noble Plainness of their Verdure, and the prodigious Stateliness of their Growth; their stupendous Bulk, and venerable Shades.

What a *Speck* are our Gardens, and what a mere *Dwarf* are our Groves, compared with these unconfined, vast Plantations?—Here is none of your nice Exactness, but all is irregularly and wildly great. Here are no Traces of the Shears, nor any Footsteps of the Spade, but the Handy-work of the DEITY is apparent in all.—Give *me* the Scenes, which disdain the puny Assistance of Art, and are infinitely superior to the low Toils of Man. Give *me* the Scenes, which scorn to *bribe* our Attention, with a little borrowed Spruceness of Shape; but, by their own native Dignity, *command* our Regard. I love the Prospects, which, the Moment they are beheld, strike the Soul with Veneration, or transport it with Wonder, which cry aloud, in the Ear of Reason, *Ascribe Ye Greatness unto our GOD* *.—Such, I think, in a very eminent Degree, is the Forest;

— — — *High waving o’er the Hills,
Or to the vast Horizon wide diffus’d,
A boundless deep Immensity of Shade.*

Asp. Solomon’s refined Genius seems to have been fond of the same Situation, and delighted with the

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• Deut. xxxii. 3.

same Objects. Therefore, at a great Expence, and in the most curious Taste, He built *The House of the Forest*.—*Isaiah's* divine Imagination was charmed with the same grand Spectacle. More frequently, than any of the Prophets, He derives his Illustrations from it. One Comparison I particularly remember. Speaking of the *Affyrian King*, and his military Forces, He likens them to such an Assemblage of Trees: *numerous*, as their amazing Multitudes; *strong*, as their massy Trunks. Yet, numerous and potent as they were, they should all be brought low, and laid in the Dust. *For behold the LORD, the LORD of Hosts shall lop the Bough with Terror, and the High Ones of Stature shall be hewn down, and the Haughty shall be humbled; and he shall cut down the Thickets of his Forest with Iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty One **.

Then

* *Isai. x. 33, 34.* In this Prediction, concerning the Destruction of *Sennacherib's Army*, the Prophet is remarkably exact, and no less beautiful.—*The high Ones of Stature*; the Nobles and principal Officers. Who, amidst all their grand Equipage and majestic Deportment, resemble the most stately Trees.—*The haughty Chiefs*, proud of their past Victories; presuming on future Conquests; and elated, in their own Imagination, like Cedars, towering to the Skies—*These shall be hewn down* from their Elevation and Dignity. *They shall be humbled*; deeply abased; and reduced to Dust and Worms.—*And HE shall cut down the Thickets*, the common Soldiers; not unlike the Shrubs and Underwood of a Forest. A promiscuous Multitude of People, who have no other Distinction, than that of being arranged into Troops.—*And Lebanon*; this gives Us a View of the Leaders and Soldiers united; under Arms; and formed in Battle Array. In this View, they appear formidable, and may seem invincible. Yet *shall they fall by a mighty One*. The LORD, by a mighty Angel

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Then He passes, by a most beautiful Transition, to his darling Topic, the Redemption of Sinners. He gives Us, together with one of the finest Contrasts * imaginable, a View of the MESSIAH and his great Salvation. When all those lofty Cedars are leveled with the Ground, *there shall come a Rod*, a single, slender Twig shall spring *from the Stem of Jesse* †. Which, notwithstanding its mean Original, and unpromising Appearance, shall rear its Head to the Skies, and extend its Shade to the Ends of the Earth.

Ther. You do well, *Aspasio*, to recal my roving Thoughts. This magnificent Solitude had captivated my Imagination, and I was giving a Loose to the usual Sallies of my Fancy. But, with a willing Compliance, I turn to a more excellent Subject.—Only I must assure you, that your Remark awakens a painful Idea in *my* Mind, though a joyful one in your own. For, my Hopes, which were once high and lifted up, are now too much like that devoted prostrate Forest.

Asp. My dear *Theron*, give me leave to say, they were never rightly founded, never built on the Foun-

Angel excelling in Strength, shall fell them to the Ground; shall destroy them easily and utterly—easily, as the Woodman, with his sharpened Ax, *lops* a single *Bough*—utterly, as all the Twigs, when once the Trunk is severed from the Root, wither, decay, and die.

* This fine Contrast, and that artful Transition are; by the injudicious Division of the two Chapters, very much obscured, if not quite lost, to many Readers. The Chapters, I think, should by no means be separated; but, the tenth and the eleventh, as a Continuation of the same Prophecy, should be *united*.

† *Isai. xi. 1.*

506 DIALOGUE XIX.

Foundation of the Gospel, which, instead of directing Us what to do, in order to obtain Acceptance with GOD, sets before Us all that is requisite for this great End, as *already* done and completed by *JESUS CHRIST*. Your Hopes were a mere System of Self-Dependence; and what you thought

— — — — — *A Real Good,
Nought else but Vanity misunderstood.*

They were, what *Shakespear* calls, *the baseless Fabric of a Vision*. Now the shadowy and transient are vanished, that solid Hopes and everlasting Joys may succeed. Let them rest on *CHRIST*, the infinitely glorious REDEEMER, and they shall never be overthrown, never be demolished any more.

Cast a Look upon yonder Ivy. What can be more feeble? It has not Strength enough to withstand the slightest Blast. Nay, if left to itself, its own Weight would crush it to the Earth. Yet, by twining around the Oak, how high it rises, and how firm it stands! An Emblem of our State, and a Pattern for our Imitation.—So let Us, who in ourselves are nothing, of ourselves can do nothing, let us fly to *CHRIST*; rely on *CHRIST*; and, as *Barnabas* (that true Son of Consolation) speaks, *cleave to the LORD JESUS CHRIST with full Purpose of Heart* *. Let us determine to know nothing, to desire nothing, to depend on nothing, but *JESUS CHRIST*, and Him crucified. Let this be the Motto for our Faith, this the Language

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* Acts xi. 23.

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DIALOGUE XIX. 507

of our Souls; *CHRIST is All*. Then shall our Virtues, though hitherto smitten with a Blast, revive as the Corn. Then shall our Hopes, though in themselves weaker than the Ivy, mount like the Cedars.

Ther. You can hardly imagine, how a Sense of Guilt and Unworthiness oppresses my Mind. I am often discouraged, and cannot bring myself to be stedfast in Faith, or joyful through Hope.

Asp. You cannot bring yourself, but GOD Almighty's Power, by the Grace of the Gospel, can bring to pass these desirable Effects. And hear what the Prophet says farther, upon the charming Topic which introduced our Discourse. Whenever the eloquent *Isaiah* undertakes to display a Truth, He gives it all the Energy, all the Beauty, and every heightening Touch, which it is capable of receiving.—This humble Shoot, springing from the Stem of *Jesse*, shall rise to such a Pitch of Elevation; that it shall be conspicuous far and near, and stand for an Ensign of the People. It shall be seen, not like a Beacon upon the Top of a Hill, by the *Israelites* only, or the Natives of a single Territory; but like the great Luminaries of Heaven, shall be visible in every Country, and by the whole inhabited World.—To it shall the Gentiles seek; not only from the remotest, but from the most barbarous and idolatrous Climes. These, even these Persons, though savage in their Nature, and detestable in their Manners, shall be freely admitted: Shall find Rest and Refreshment under his Shadow. Nay, the Refreshment which He yields, and the Comfort which

508 DIALOGUE XIX.

which they receive, shall be not seasonable only, but of sovereign Efficacy; *his Rest shall be glorious* *, shall be attended with perfect Security; shall be productive of every Good; and issue in everlasting Joy.

From this we learn, that all the Blessings of *CHRIST*'s Mediation are designed for *Gentiles*; for the most abandoned and most abominable Sinners.—That they are so full and consummate, as to create a Calm of Tranquility, a *glorious Rest*, even in the most troubled, afflicted, guilty Consciences.—And I dare challenge my *Theron*'s mis-giving Mind, to specify any Want which is not supplied, any Grievance which is not redressed, by the Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*. I formerly encountered your *Objections*, let me now combat your *Scruples*.

Ther. Sometimes, I have a deep and distressing Conviction of my extreme Sinfulness.—'Tis like a sore Burden, too heavy for me to bear.—'Tis like the vilest Filth, and renders me odious to myself; how much more lothesome to the all-seeing Eye?—It appears like a Debt of ten thousand Talents, and I have nothing, no, not any thing to pay.—Then I experience, what the *Psalmist* so pathetically laments; *My Sins have taken such Hold upon me, that I am not able to look up: yea, they are more in Number than the Hairs of my Head*, and my Heart is ready to fail; my Hopes are upon the Point to expire.

* *Isai. xi. 10.*

Asp. Then, *Theron*, fly to that just and righteous ONE, who is the Strength of our Hearts; the Life of our Hopes; and our Portion for ever.

If Sin is a sore *Burden*; look unto *CHRIST*, who bore it all, in his own Body on the Tree; and removed, entirely removed that tremendous Load, which would otherwise have sunk the whole World into the nethermost Hell.—If Sin renders us *filthy*; let Us have recourse to that Blood of Sprinkling, which cleanses, not from a few Stains only, but from all Guilt. By which the most defiled Transgressors, become fair as the fairest Wool; nay, whiter than the virgin Snows *.—If Sin is a *Debt* †; subjecting Us to Wrath, and binding Us over to Punishment; let Us confide in that gracious SURETY, who has taken the Debt upon Himself, and made it all his own. And not only so, but has paid it; paid it to the uttermost Farthing; to the very last Mite. So that Justice itself can demand no more.

Let

* Psal. li. 7.

† By these three Images, the *Psalmist* displays the horrible Nature, and destructive Malignity of Sin; together with the free Grant and invaluable Worth of the Forgiveness, which is in *CHRIST JESUS*. *Blessed is he whose Transgression*, as an insupportable Load, (נשוי) *is bore or taken away*; *whose Sin*, as being the most abominable Filth, (כסוי) *is covered*; *unto whom the LORD imputeth not* (לא יחשוב) *that most ruinous of all Debts, Iniquity*.—It is pleasing and instructive to observe the Vehemence and the Ardour, with which the royal Penitent speaks on this favourite Topic. He breaks out with a Kind of holy *Abruptness*, and pours his Soul in a *Variety* of the warmest Expressions. As one who thought, he could not possibly enter upon the Subject *too soon*, or dwell upon it *too long*. Psal. xxxii. 1, 2.

510 DIALOGUE XIX.

Let me confirm and illustrate this comfortable Truth, by a scriptural Similitude. No Similitudes are more exact, and none so striking. *I have* (not you, by your penitential Exercises; but I, by my free Grace have) *blotted out as a thick Cloud your Transgressions, and as a Cloud your Sins* *. A little while ago, the whole Expanse of yonder Sky was covered with Clouds. Nothing could more strongly represent, a Multitude of Corruptions besieging the Heart, and a Multitude of Iniquities overspreading the Life.—But where is, now, that immense Arrangement of gloomy Vapours? The Sun has shone them, and the Wind has swept them, clean away. There are none, neither great nor small, remaining. From one End of the wide extended Hemisphere to the other, we see nothing but the clear and beautiful Blue of the Firmament. So, saith the SPIRIT of GOD, to the Sinner that believes; *so totally* is your Guilt, however horrid and enormous, done away through the dying JESUS.

Ther. It is not possible to conceive, nor will the whole Creation afford, a more exquisitely fine Comparison. Nothing can so emphatically describe the most prodigious Multitude, entirely obliterated, without the *least Trace* of their former Existence.—When a Stain is taken from our Garments, the Defilement is removed, but the fine native Gloss never returns. When a Wound is healed in our Flesh, the Gash is closed up, but some Blemish or Scar always remains. Whereas, when a Cloud is brushed away from the Sky, not only the transient
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* Isai, xliv. 22.

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DIALOGUE XIX. 511

Blot disappears, but the delicate Expanse, the “living Sapphire”, is as glossy and brilliant as ever *. —But I am not only chargeable with *past* Iniquities; I am also liable to *daily* Miscarriages. I relapse into Sin; and when I would do Good, Evil is present with me.—Nay; my best Hours are not free from sinful Infirmities, nor my best Duties from sinful Imperfections. Which, like a Worm at the Core of the Fruit, eat away the Vigour, and tarnish the Beauty of my Services.

Asp. Because through the Frailty of your mortal Nature, You cannot always stand upright; because, even the *just Man falleth daily*, and daily contracteth Defilement; therefore *a Fountain is opened for Sin*

* There seems to be an Exactness and a Delicacy in the Prophet's Comparison, which neither *Theron* nor *Aspasio* have observed. The Gradation I mean, the beautiful and comfortable Gradation, in the Sense of those Words, עָבַר שָׁנָן. Which, I think, should be translated *Nubes, Nubecula*; as a *thick* Cloud, yea, as a *thin* Cloud.

Lest Unbelief should object to the first Clause; “A Body of thick Clouds, diffused over the whole Sky, is a sullen and obstinate Thing. It sits deep; hangs heavy; and will not easily yield, either to the Sun, or to the Wind.” The LORD is pleased to anticipate and prevent the Objection, by adding; *I will blot out, as a thin Cloud, thy Transgressions*. Be they ever so numerous, before my unbounded Grace, and the infinite Merits of thy SAVIOUR's Death, they shall be as the *Morning* Cloud (*Hof. vi. 4.*) which soon passeth away; they shall be as the *detached* Cloud (*Gen. ix. 14. 15. Heb. Bib.*) which the gentlest Gale dislodges from the Firmament.”

See *Hof. xiii. 3.* where the Word עָנָן makes one, in a Group of the finest Images, that ever were exhibited to the Eye of the Mind. Finest and most picturesque, to represent an *unstable, transitory, vanishing* Condition.

Sin and for Uncleanness *. The Blood and Atonement of *CHRIST* are compared to a heavenly Fountain. In which polluted Sinners may wash daily, wash hourly; and be constantly, perfectly clean.—A *Cistern* may fail; may be broken or exhausted. But it is the Property of a real Fountain, never to be dried up, always to yield its Waters. Such is the Efficacy of *CHRIST*'s Death! Not to be diminished by universal and by incessant Use. It removes the Iniquity of the Land †. It takes away the Sin of the World ‡. It is new, for our Application, every Morning; new, for this blessed Purpose, every Moment. On which Account, it makes complete Provision for our Cleansing, our Restoration, and our Comfort.—Abolishing our daily, hourly, momentary Miscarriages, as thoroughly, as these Sun-beams overcome and dissipate the Shades of Night.—Especially, as this Blood is not only sovereign in its Virtue, and always free for our Approach, but is ever pleaded by a great HIGH-PRIEST in our Behalf. Therefore, the inspired Casuist directs Us to this Source of Consolation, under all the Upbraidings of Conscience, and amidst all the Remains of inbred Depravity. *If any Man sin, We have an Advocate with the FATHER, JESUS CHRIST the Righteous, and He is the Propitiation for our Sins* §.

We; St. John reckons Himself in the Number of those frail offending Creatures, who stand in need of *CHRIST*, as a perpetual Intercessor. This is written, not to encourage Us in the Commission

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* Zech. xiii. 1. † Zech. iii. 9. ‡ John i. 29.
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DIALOGUE XIX. 513

of Sin; but that We may be the less discouraged, under a Sense of our Infirmities.—We *have*; not We possibly may, but We actually have. A Soul burdened with Guilt, cannot be satisfied, cannot be eased, with a bare *Perhaps*. It is therefore positively affirmed; as a Matter of established Certainty; of which We should not admit a Doubt.—We have for our Advocate, not a *mean* Person, but HIM who received an illustrious Testimony from the most excellent Glory, *This is my beloved SON**—Not a *guilty* Person, who stands in need of Pardon for Himself, but *JESUS CHRIST*, the divinely, the supremely, the only *righteous* One.—Not a mere Petitioner, who relies upon Liberality or Mercy; but who has *merited*, fully merited whatever He asks, in Behalf of his Clients. Being *the Propitiation for our Sins*; having paid our Ransom, and purchased our Peace—In consequence of which, He *claims* rather than asks our renewed, our irrevocable Forgiveness—This He claims, not from an unrelenting Judge, but from his FATHER and our FATHER—And can *such* a Plea meet with a Repulse? Can *such* an Advocate miscarry in his Suit?—If the Prophets of old were reckoned, *The Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof* †; because,

* 2 Pet. i. 17.

† 2 Kings ii. 12. xiii. 14. There is a peculiar Beauty, and most apposite Significancy, in this *proverbial* Saying, as used by the antient *Israelites*. *Horses* and *Chariots* were deemed, in those Ages, the principal Strength of the Battle, the most formidable Apparatus of War. Of these the *Israelites* were entirely destitute. Their GOD had expressly forbidden them to multiply Horses; and We never read of their bringing any considerable Num-

cause, like their Ancestor *Jacob*, they had Power with GOD, and prevailed in Prayer: O! what a Defence, what a Security, is the sublimely excellent, and ever-prevailing Intercession of *JESUS CHRIST!*

“ Your Services, You complain, are tarnished “ and defective.”—Then, my dear Friend, renounce them in Point of Confidence; and gladly receive, cordially embrace, the all-perfect Righteousness of your LORD.—*The Law makes nothing perfect.* Your own Conformity to its Precepts, can never fit You for Heaven, never give You Peace of Conscience. Hither if We look for any of these desirable Blessings; We are like those Travellers, who look for the Fruits of *Eden* in the Desarts of *Arabia*. But our LORD *JESUS CHRIST*, by one Oblation, has perfected for ever, them that are sanctified.

By the Oblation of Himself; which was grand, inconceivably great, and of infinite Efficacy; being ennobled by all the Glories of the GODHEAD.—On which Account, it needed no Repetition; it was incapable of any Augmentation; it is all-sufficient, though but *One*.—By this immensely efficacious Sacrifice He hath perfected. What are We to understand by this Expression? The Epistle to the *Colossians* informs Us. He hath rendered them *unblameable and unreprouceable in his Sight*. To be free from Blame; without any Cause of just Reproof; chargeable

ber of Cavalry into the Field.—But, so long as they enjoyed the Presence of their Prophets, they wanted not this Arm of Flesh. They had more than an Equivalent for Squadrons of Horse, and Chariots of Iron, in the fervent, the effectual Prayers of those holy Men of GOD.

DIALOGUE XIX. 515

able with no Failure; Is not this a State of Perfection?—And this, not merely before a human or angelic Scrutiny, but *in his Sight*; before that all-penetrating Eye, which searcheth the Hearts; before that most pure Eye, which cannot behold Iniquity.—This Perfection, effected by our REDEEMER's Satisfaction, is not barely for a Day, or a Season; it knows no Intermiſſion; it continues *for ever*. Not like the green Hue, which vernal Suns have imparted to theſe Herbs and Plants; but like the blue Luſtre, which the Almighty Fiat gave to yonder Expanſe of the Skies.

Ther. What meaneth the following Expreſſion? Methinks, that damps my Hopes. If I ſhould not be in the Number of the Sanctified, this Text ſpeaks no Comfort to me.

Aſp. *Thoſe that are ſanctified*, ſays an eminent Critic, ſignify thoſe who are endued with the evangelical Sanctification *. Which conſiſts in the Holineſs, the Obedience, the Death of *CHRIST*, imputed to them, and received by Faith. Whereby, they are cleaned from all their Filthineſs, and conſtituted righteous in the Preſence of *GOD*.—It is pretty evident, that the Apoſtle cannot intend the Righteouſneſs of Works, or inherent Holineſs; becauſe, that is always imperfect. Of that, *David* cries out, in the Language of Deſpondency. *Enter not into Judgement with thy Servant*. And assigns this Reason for his Request; *In thy Sight*, and in this Reſpect, *no Man living ſhall be juſtified*, or found perfect. No; nothing can claim that Character before *HIM* who dwelleth in Light inacceſſible, but only the Work, the Sufferings, the Righteouſneſs

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* See *STOCKIUS* on the Word *ayalos*.

ness of *CHRIST*. These therefore, and these only, can *make the Comers thereunto perfect*.

I have somewhere seen, painted upon a flat Surface, an aukward and disagreeable Countenance. Nothing was regular; nothing graceful; but every Feature disproportionate. Yet this very Face, reflected from a cylindrical Mirror, has put off its Deformity; the Lineaments were reformed and well adjusted; Symmetry connected every Part, and Beauty smiled throughout the Whole.—Like the *former* our Virtues appear, when compared with the immaculate Purity of *GOD*, or the sublime Perfection of his Law. But they acquire the Amiability of the *latter*, when presented to the *FATHER* by our divine *MEDIATOR*; when recommended by his most precious Oblation; and *accepted in the BELOVED* *.

Milton, taking his Hint from the Revelation of *St. John*, represents our great *HIGH-PRIEST*, in this glorious and delightful Attitude. Represents Him, offering up the Supplications and penitential

Duties

* *They, the Persons and Performances of frail Men, shall come up with Acceptance on mine Altar, saith the LORD. Isai. lx. 7.*—Which is explained by *St. Peter's* Comment; *Ye are an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable unto GOD by JESUS CHRIST*, 1 Pet. ii. 5. And still farther ascertained by *St. Paul's* Practice. Who, when He addresses the *MAJESTY* of Heaven with any Petition, or presents the Tribute of Praise, presumes not to do either the one or the other, but on the appointed Altar, or in the blessed *MEDIATOR's* Name. Because, secluded from this grand Recommendation, they would be *offensive* to the awful *JEHOVAH*, “as Smoke in his Nostrils;” accompanied with it, they are *acceptable*, “as the sweet smelling Incense.”

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DIALOGUE XIX. 517

Duties of our first Parents; purifying and perfuming them with the Incense of his own Merits; and thus interceding before the Throne.

See, FATHER! what first Fruits on Earth are sprung

*From thy implanted Grace in Man! These Sighs
And Prayers, which in this golden Censer mix'd
With Incense, I thy PRIEST before Thee bring.
— Now therefore bend thine Ear*

*To Supplication; hear his Sighs though mute!
Unskilful with what Words to pray, let ME
Interpret for Him; ME his Advocate
And Propitiation. All his Works on ME,
Good, or not good, ingraft: MY Merit those
Shall perfect; and for these MY Death shall pay*.*

The Poet's Words are very *emphatical*. Yet Words can no more express the *Prevalence* of our LORD's Negotiation, than the Picture of the Sun can diffuse its Splendor, or convey its Warmth. — Though *our* poor Performances are rendered acceptable by this prevailing Intercessor; let Us never forget, that *His* Works, supremely righteous and incomparably excellent, are the Cause of our Salvation. By *his* Works, I am justified: by *his* Works, I am saved. *They* are my Plea; and can there be a more substantial one? *They* are my Boast; and can there be a more rational one?

Ther. When I look on myself, and my religious Obligations, I find, that my spiritual Wants are many. I have many Duties to discharge, and

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many

* MILTON. Book XI. l. 22, &c.

518 D I A L O G U E XIX.

many Temptations to withstand. I have many Corruptions to mortify, and many Graces to cultivate. Yet have I no Stock, and no Strength of my own.

Asp. I rejoice, that my *Theron* is sensible of his own Indigence. The good LORD keep Us both, in this Respect as little Children; whose whole Dependence is upon their Nurse's Care, or their Parent's Bounty! Then may we, having such a Sense of our Poverty, and having a great HIGH-PRIEST over the House of GOD, come boldly to the Throne of Grace. We may apply, through the Righteousness of JESUS CHRIST, for all needful Succour, and for every desirable Blessing.—If *Solomon* could say; LORD, remember *David*, and all his Trouble. If *Moses* could say; LORD, remember *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* thy Servants. How much more confidently may we say; “LORD, remember JESUS, the Son of thy “Love! Remember JESUS, and all his Suffer- “ings; JESUS and all his Merits. Shall they “be sent empty away, who have their SAVIOUR’s “Obedience and Death to plead?”—No verily. Though they are altogether unworthy in themselves, yet worthy is the LAMB that was slain, for whose Sake their Petitions should be granted, and their every Necessity supplied.

Let me repeat to you a most beautiful and encouraging Portion of Scripture. Which you may look upon, under all your Wants, as *Charte Blanche* put into your Hand by GOD all-sufficient. It gives You full Liberty, to ask what You need; and good Ground, to expect what You ask. *Hav- ing therefore, Brethren, Boldness to enter into the Holiest*

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Holiest by the Blood of JESUS; by a new and living Way which he has consecrated for Us, through the Veil, that is to say, his Flesh; And having an HIGH-PRIEST over the House of GOD; let us draw near with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith.*

The Apostle, in this Place, and throughout this whole Epistle, alludes to the *Mosaic* Ordinances; in order to shew, that the Privileges of the *Christian* Dispensation, were typified by, yet are greatly superior to, those of the *Jewish*.—Among the *Jews*, none but the *High-Priest*, was permitted to set a Foot within the Holy of Holies; and He, only on the solemn Day of Expiation. Whereas, *all Christians* are allowed to enter into the immediate Presence of the most High GOD; may have the nearest Access to HIM, who dwells in the Heaven of Heavens; and this, not once in the Year only, but at all Times, and on all Occasions.—The High-Priest never made that awful Approach, but with the Blood of a *slaughtered* Animal. We have Blood of infinitely richer Value, to atone for our Failings, and recommend our Addresses; even the Blood of the *crucified* JESUS.—Aaron entered through the Veil of the Temple; a Way, which was soon to become antiquated, and for ever to be abolished. *We* enter by a far more noble Way; by the Flesh of our blessed REDEEMER; given as a propitiatory Sacrifice for our Sins. Which Way is both *new* and *living*; such as never waxes old, will subsist to the End of Time, and leads to eternal Life.—Trusting in this Sacrifice, and entering by this Way, which are consecrated on Purpose for our Use, We may not only draw

K k 4

near,

* Heb. x. 19, 20, 21, 22.

near, but draw near *with Boldness*, with an humble filial Confidence; and present our Supplications with *Assurance* of Faith—with *full Assurance* of Faith.

How strong is the Contrast, and how fine the Gradation! How precious the Doctrine, and how free the Privilege! What shall we fear, if we believe this Doctrine? What can we lack, if we improve this Privilege?—And why should We not believe the former, why should We not improve the latter? Since they both are founded, not on any excellent Endowments, not on any recommending Actions of our own, but *purely, solely, entirely* on the Blood of *JESUS CHRIST*.

Ther. There may come Seasons of *Desertion*, when all Graces are languid, if not dead: When the Light of GOD's Countenance is suspended, if not turned into Darkness: and the Man is more like a lifeless Log, than a zealous *Christian*. These Frames of Mind I have heard mentioned, and I begin to know something of them by Experience.

Asp. Then *Theron*, when you walk in *Darkness*, and see no Light of sensible Comfort, trust in the Name, the unchangeable Grace, of the LORD; and stay upon the Righteousness, the consummate Righteousness, of your GOD*. This, you see, is not barely my Advice, but the Direction of an infallible Guide.—This agrees also with the Character of a real *Christian*, as it is most exactly drawn by an unerring Pen. *We rejoice in CHRIST JESUS, and have no Confidence in the Flesh*†; no Reliance

* *Isai.* l. 10.

† *Phil.* iii. 3. *Exactly drawn*—Perhaps, there is no where extant a finer, a more complete, or so lively a Picture

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DIALOGUE XIX. 421

Reliance on any Thing of our own, either for present Joy, or future Glory. What *CHRIST* has done, is that which pleases *GOD*. What *CHRIST* has done, is that which quiets our Consciences, and cheers our Hearts. It is the glorious Robe of *HIS* Righteousness, which covers our Sins, and adorns our Persons; which renders Us completely and eternally righteous before *GOD* himself; and gives Us a sure, an unalienable Title to the Blessedness of Heaven.

To rely on the Elevation of our Spirits, or the Enlargement of our Devotion, is like building our House upon the *Ice*. Which may abide for a Season; but, upon the first Alteration of Weather, ceases to be a Foundation, and becomes *Water that runneth apace*. Whereas, to derive our Consolation from the *MEDIATOR*'s Righteousness, and *JEHOVAH*'s Faithfulness, is to build our Edifice upon the *Rock*: which *may not be removed, but standeth fast for ever*. The former of these, even amidst all our Changes, is invariably the same. The latter, notwithstanding all our Unworthiness, is inviolably sure. Therefore, the *Fruit* of that Righteous-

Picture of the true Christian. 'Tis in *Miniature*, I own; but it comprehends all the *master* Lines, and every *distinguishing* Feature. *We are they, who worship GOD in the Spirit*; with the spiritual Homage of a renewed Heart; with Faith, Love, Resignation. *And rejoice in CHRIST JESUS*; in Him look for all our Acceptance with *GOD*; from Him derive all the Peace of our Minds; and on Him place all the Hope of our final Felicity. *And have no Confidence in the Flesh*; or any Thing whatever, that seemed excellent in Man. Renouncing ourselves, in every View, as unprofitable Servants; disclaiming all our own Works and Attainments, as defective Services.

Righteousness is Peace, and the *Effect* of this Faithfulness is, if not rapturous Joy, yet *Quietness and Assurance for ever* *.

So that when it is Winter in my Soul, and there lies a Dearth on all my sensible Delights, I would still say with the Psalmist ; “ *Why art thou so dis-*
“ *quieted, O my Soul ? CHRIST is the same a-*
“ *midst all thy Derelictions. He is a green Fir-*
“ *Tree* †, which never loses its Verdure. Under
“ his Shadow Thou may’st always find Repose.

“ We have Peace with GOD, not because
“ We feel this or that holy Emotion in our Breasts :
“ not because We are conscious of any Differ-
“ ence, between Ourselves and the most flagitious
“ of Mankind. But because JESUS is the
“ CHRIST, and has fulfilled all Righteousness
“ in our Stead.—We may not always be fervent
“ in Spirit. We may not always be free from
“ vile Affections. But his Merit and Atonement
“ are always mighty to save. They constitute an
“ everlasting and infinite Basis for our Justifica-
“ tion. The Promises of GOD, through his
“ Mediation, are yea, and amen † ; are unquesti-
“ onably

* Isai. xxxii. 17. † Hof. xiv. 8.

† 2 Cor. i. 20. *Yea and Amen*—*Yea* ; that is, *our own*. When a poor Man presents a Petition, and his rich Friend answers, *Yea* ; the Favour is granted ; the Gift becomes his own.—*Amen* ; *sure to be performed*. The Word signifies *Truth* or *Faithfulness*. Implying, that the Promises are as certain, as Truth can make them ; as much to be depended on, as Faithfulness itself.—All this in CHRIST JESUS. Not by Virtue of any good Works, or on Condition of any Worthiness in Us, but wholly on Account of CHRIST JESUS—of his inestimable Blood, and everlasting Righteousness.

“onably and irrevocably ours;” are, amidst all
“Circumstances, and under the deepest Defer-
“tion, ours.”

Ther. 'Tis very probable, I may meet with
Afflictions; Death in my Family, or Disease in
my Person. Disappointments may frustrate my
Designs. Providence may wear a frowning Af-
pect; as though the LORD had a Controversy
with his sinful Creature, and was causing Him
to possess the Iniquities of his Youth. And what
will be sufficient to support and to chear, in such a
gloomy Hour *?

Asp. The Righteousness of *CHRIST*:—An
Ambassador from the *Spanish* Court was once extol-
ling, at a prodigious Rate, the Magnificence and
Glory of his Sovereign. He set about proving his
Superiority to all other Monarchs, by running over
a long Catalogue of Countries, Provinces, and
States subject to his Dominion. An Envoy from
the *French* King being present, replied to each of
these petty Titles, *France! France!* never varying
his Answer, but still repeating the Word *France*.
Thereby representing this one Monarchy, as more
than equivalent to all those inconsiderable Prin-
cipalities.—With unspeakably greater Propriety
may I constantly reiterate, *The Righteousness! The*
Righteousness! The incomprehensibly glorious Righteous-
ness

* The Sufficiency of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness,
to answer all these important and delightful Ends, is
excellently displayed in Mr. RAWLIN's Sermons, en-
titled *CHRIST the Righteousness of his People*. In which
the Public have seen the grand and amiable Essentials of
the Gospel, delivered in masculine Language; defended
by nervous Reasoning; and animated with a lively De-
votion.

ness of JESUS CHRIST! as a most satisfactory Answer to all Complaints; as a most solid Support under all Troubles; and as more than equal to all our Wants.

Nothing is so sovereign, to calm our Fears, and remove all Apprehensions of the divine Wrath. Apprehensions of the divine Wrath, would draw the Curtains of Horror around our sick Beds, and throw upon our languishing Eye-lids the Shadow of Death *. But a believing Improvement of the imputed Righteousness *clears up* the mournful Scene, and *takes away* the Sting of Tribulation.

Attending to this great Propitiation, the Sufferer sees his Sins forgiven, and his GOD reconciled. From whence he concludes, that the severest Afflictions are only fatherly Corrections; shall not exceed his Ability to bear; and shall assuredly obtain a gracious Issue. He can fetch Comfort from that cheering Word, *I will be with him in Trouble*: And expect the Accomplishment of that most consolatory Promise, *I will deliver Him, and bring him to Honour* †.—These Supports have enabled the Saints, to kiss the Rod, and bless the Hand, which chastised them. To possess their Souls, not in Patience only, but in Thankfulness also. While they have *looked inward*, and discerned their absolute Need of these bitter but salutary Medicines: Have *looked upward*, and beheld the Cup in a most wise
and

* Alluding to that Description of Tribulation and Anguish, which, I believe, no Person of Sensibility can read without shuddering; *My Face is foul with Weeping, and on my Eye-lids is the Shadow of Death.* Job xvi. 16.

† Psal. xci. 15.

DIALOGUE XIX. 525

and tender PHYSICIAN's Hand : Have *look-
ed forward*, with a joyful Hope, to that better
World ; where GOD will wipe away all Tears
from their Eyes, and there shall be no more Sor-
row, nor any more Pain.

Ther. The last Occasion of Need is the trying
Hour of *Death*, and the tremendous Day of *Judg-
ment*. Will this Righteousness carry Us, with Safe-
ty, through the darksome Valley ; and present Us,
with Acceptance, at the dreadful Tribunal ?

Asp. It will : It will.—This silences all the
Curse of the Law, and disarms Death of every
Terror. To believe in this Righteousness, is to
meet Death at our SAVIOUR's Side ; or ra-
ther, like good old *Simeon*, with the SAVIOUR
in our Arms.—*They overcame*, says the beloved
Disciple ; they overcame the last Enemy, not by
natural Fortitude, or philosophic Resolution, but
by the *Blood of the LAMB**. By that grand
Price of Redemption, which cost the REDEEM-
ER every Drop of his Blood ; which delivers
Sinners from the Wrath to come, and entitles
them to the incorruptible Inheritance.

I know, adds the heroic Apostle, *whom I have
believed* † ; I am assured, that my JESUS is in-
finitely faithful, and will not desert me ; that his
Ransom is absolutely sufficient, and cannot deceive
me. Therefore, with a holy Bravery, He bids De-
fiance to Death ; or rather, triumphs over it, as a
vanquished Enemy ; *Thanks be to GOD who giveth
Us the Victory through our LORD JESUS
CHRIST* ‡ !—Nay, through the victorious Efficacy

* Rev. xii. 11. † 2 Tim. i. 12. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 57.

526 DIALOGUE XIX.

cacy of *CHRIST's* Propitiation, *Death is ours**; not our Foe, but our Friend and Deliverer. We may number it among our Treasures; and rest satisfied, *That to die, is Gain.*

What? Though our *Flesh* see Corruption. Though this Body, vile at present, be made viler still, by dwelling amidst Worms, and mouldering in the Dust; yet through *HIS* Righteousness, who is the Resurrection and the Life, it shall shake off the Dishonours of the Grave: It shall rise to a new and illustrious State of Existence: It shall be made like the *glorious* and *immortal* Body of our triumphant *LORD*.—If the Body be so refined, so exalted; what will be the Dignity, what the Perfection, of the Soul! Or rather, of Soul and Body both, when they are happily and indissolubly united, at the Resurrection of the Just?—Shall they have any thing to fear, when the Judgment is set, and the Books are opened? 'Tis probable there will be no Accusation, 'tis certain *there is no Condemnation, to them that are in CHRIST JESUS†*. Who shall lay any Thing to their Charge? *It is GOD*—not Man, or Angel, or any Creature, but *GOD*—*that justifies* them. The *GOD* whose Law was broke, the *GOD* to whom Vengeance belongeth, He Himself pronounces them *innocent*, because their Iniquities have been laid upon *CHRIST*; He Himself pronounces them *righteous*, because they are interested in the Obedience of their REDEEMER; on these Accounts, He Himself pronounces them *blessed*, and gives them an *abundant Entrance* into the Joy of their *LORD*.

But

* 1 Cor. iii. 22.

† Rom. viii. 1.

DIALOGUE XIX. 527

But what can express, or who can imagine their Happiness, when they take up their Abode, in the Palaces of Heaven; amidst the Choirs of Angels; and under the Light of GOD's Countenance! When they possess *the Hope of Righteousness* *; when they wear *the Crown of Righteousness* †; and receive that great, that eternal Salvation, which is an adequate Recompence for the Humiliation and Agonies of *JESUS CHRIST the righteous* ‡.

Come then, my dear *Theron*, let Us henceforth be as Branches, ingrafted into the heavenly VINE; derive all our Sap, all our Moisture, all our Consolation, from his Fulness. Let Us live upon our all-sufficient REDEEMER, as the *Israelites* subsisted on their Manna from Heaven, and their Waters from the Rock; and not wish for *other*, as we cannot possibly enjoy *better* Sustenance.

Ther. Is this the Meaning of our LORD's Exhortation, when he shews the Necessity of *eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood*?

Asp. 'Tis the very same. A repeated and incessant Application of our SAVIOUR's Merits, for all the Purposes of Piety and Salvation, is the Kernel of this Nut, the Meaning of this Metaphor.—*When we habitually advert to JESUS CHRIST, as dying for our Sins, and rising again for our Justification; performing all Righteousness, that we may be intitled to an eternal Crown; and interceding in Heaven, that we may be filled with all the Fulness of GOD: Then we eat his Flesh, and drink his Blood.—When We habitually advert to JESUS CHRIST,*

* Gal. v. 5. † 2 Tim. iv. 8. ‡ 1 John ii. 1.

CHRIST, as entirely abolishing all our Guilt; making Us whiter than Snow, by his most precious Blood; and, through his transcendently noble Obedience, presenting Us unblameable before *GOD*. Then we derive a Life of solid Comfort, and real Godliness, from his mediatorial Offices; just as we derive the Continuance of our natural Life, from the daily Use of alimentary Recruits.

Ther. Your Discourse brings to my Remembrance that magnificent and beautiful Passage in Scripture, where *CHRIST* is called *THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS*. Your Doctrine sets the Comparison in a very advantageous Light; gives it the utmost Force, and the greatest Propriety.—The Righteousness of *CHRIST*, according to your Account, is as extensively useful in the *Christian* Life, as the Beams of that grand Luminary are in the material World.—The Sun fills the *Air*; where it sheds the Light, and pours the Day.—The Sun penetrates the *Ocean*; from whence it exhales Vapours, and forms the Clouds.—In the *vegetable* Creation, the Sun raises the Sap, and protrudes the Gems; unfolds the Leaves, and paints the Blossom; distends the Fruit, and concocts the Juices.—Turn we to the *animal* World; the Sun lends Sight to every Eye, and awakens Myriads of Insects into Being. It diffuses those reviving Rays, in which all Nature basks and dispenses that general Smile, in which every sensible Creature exults. Indeed, its benign Agency is universal. *There is nothing hid from the Heat thereof.*

Assp. Thus the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, that true and only *Sun of Righteousness*, arises on his People

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People *with Healing in his Wings* *. So various, so efficacious, and so extensive are his Influences. Like a *Sun*, He enlightens and enlivens : like *Wings*, He cherishes and protects : like a Remedy, He *heals* and restores. And all, by virtue of his Righteousness, on account of his *Righteousness*.—Nor can We doubt, nor need We wonder, if We consider its Nature and its Author. Its *Nature* ; it is supremely excellent, has every Kind, and every Degree of Perfection. Its *Author* ; it is the Righteousness and Obedience of that sublime PERSON, in whom *dwells all the Fulness of the GODHEAD*.

It must therefore—You will permit me to sum up in a Word, what has been displayed at large—It must be fully answerable to the *Demands* of the *Law*, even in its highest Purity, and utmost Exactness.—It is infinitely superior to the *Demerit* of *Sin*, and entirely absolves from all Guilt, entirely exempts from all Condemnation.—It is a most valid and never-failing Plea, against the *Accusations* of *Satan*, and the Challenges of Conscience.—It establishes an undoubted *Title* to *every* Blessing, whether in Time or in Eternity, whether of Grace or of Glory.—It is a sure Support for the Christian, in an Hour of *Desertion*, and in the Agonies of *Death*. Casting Anchor on this Bottom, He may dismiss every Fear, and ride out every Storm. Leaning upon this Staff, He may go down to the Repose of the Grave ; and neither be appalled at the solemn Harbingers of Dissolution, nor terrified at its far more awful Consequences.—The Merit of this Righteousness, and the Power of its DIVINE AUTHOR, will unseal the Tomb ; will bring forth the sleeping Dust

from the Chambers of Putrefaction; and build up the whole Man into Immortality and Glory. By this He will be presented *without Spot* *; presented *faultless* †; yea, be presented *perfect* ‡, and with *exceeding Joy*, before the Throne.

What a Gift then is the *Righteousness of CHRIST*!
 —“ O my Soul, what wouldst thou wish, for thy
 “ Consolation and Joy? What wouldst thou wish,
 “ to be the Stability of thy Hope, and the Strength
 “ of thy Salvation?—Wouldst thou have that,
 “ which is greater than the whole World, and all
 “ its Grandeur, and all its Treasure? Thou hast
 “ it in *CHRIST*.—Wouldst thou have that, which
 “ is greater than the Heaven of Heavens, and all
 “ its starry Hosts, and all its angelic Inhabitants?
 “ Thou hast it in *CHRIST*.—Wouldst thou
 “ have that, which is abundantly greater, incom-
 “ parably greater, immensely greater than all?
 “ Thou hast it in *CHRIST*.—Wouldst thou have
 “ that, which is great as the inexorable Justice of
 “ *GOD* can demand; great as the unfathomable
 “ Wisdom of *GOD* can devise? Thou hast it in
 “ *CHRIST*.—Wouldst thou have that, which
 “ is great, and excellent, and glorious, as the Per-
 “ fections of the almighty and eternal *GOD*?
 “ Thou hast it in the Holiness, the Righteousness,
 “ and the Blood of *CHRIST*—in the immacu-
 “ late Holiness of his Nature—in the consummate
 “ Righteousness of his Life—and the infinitely
 “ precious Blood of his Cross.—Surely, then, Thou
 “ hast to say, with the holy Apostle; Blessed be
 “ *GOD* for this UNSPEAKABLE GIFT.”

A

* Eph. v. 27.

† Jude 24.

‡ Col. i. 28.

T A B L E

OF THE

T E X T S,

More or less *Illustrated* in this WORK.

G E N.

CHAP.	VER.	VOL.	PAG.
ii	17	II	124
iii	15	II	65, 369
iv	4	I	353
v	3	II	123
vi	3	II	146
vi	5	II	139
vi	14	I	102
viii	21	II	140
xxii	2	III	242
xxii	14	III	254
xxii	18	H	370
xlvi	16	III	170

E X O D.

xv	9, 10	III	132
xx	2	I	344, 5
xxviii	31	II	37
xxviii	38	II	372
xxxiv	7	I	160, 1

L E V I T.

vii	18	I	200
xvi	5	I	95
xvii	3, 4	I	57

N U M B.

xv	38	I	249
xviii	23	I	229
xxiii	21	I	103
xxiv	5, 6	II	325
xxxv	13	II	84, 5

L 1 2

D E U T.

TEXTS *Illustrated.*

DEUT.

CHAP.	VER.	VOL.	PAGE
xxviii	16	III	144
xxxii	2	III	26
xxxii	10	II	205
xxxii	14	III	89, 90
xxxiii	13, &c.	III	95, 6

JUDG.

xv	8	II	170
xxvi	6	II	148

I SAM.

xx	30	III	342
xxiii	25, &c.	I	253, 4
xxiv	7	II	32, 3

2 SAM.

xv	31	II	334
xviii	33	I	18, 9
xxiii	3	III	373
xxiii	4	III	81
xxiii	5	II	65

I KINGS

x	5	I	264
xviii	27	II	284

2 KINGS

ii	12	III	513, 4
xiv	9	II	296
xx	3	I	390

NEHEM.

ii	4	II	333, 4
----	---	----	--------

JOB

i	1	II	283
ii	4	II	184
vi	7	II	254
ix	20, 21, 30, 1, 2	I	387, 8
x	22	II	248
xi	12	II	237
xv	14, 15, 16	II	136
xix	25, 27	III	408
xxvi	8	III	26

T E X T S *Illustrated.*

CHAP.	VER.	VOL.	PAG.
xxviii	5	III	34
xxix	19	III	291
xxxiii	22, &c.	II	372
xxxvi	28	III	26
xxxvii	16	III	26
xxxviii	7	III	40
xxxviii	11	III	124
xxxviii	37, 38	III	77
xli	22	III	161
xlili	6	II	373

P S A L.

viii	6, 7, 8	III	182
xiv	2, 3	II	134
xv	1	I	296
xv	4	I	298
xix	5	III	80
xix	11	I	331
xxii	3	II	331
xxii	8	II	405
xxiii	3	II	374
xxiv	4, 5	II	377
xxix	4, 5, 6	III	142, 3
xxix	9	III	431, 2
xxxii	1, 2	III	509
xxxvii	20	III	464
xliv	5	I	250, I
li	5	II	131
li	7	II	82
lvii	8	II	217
lviii	9	III	470
lix	15	II	255
lx	6	III	445
lxi	12	I	283
lxv	11, 12, 13	III	463
lxviii	9	III	78
lxviii	18	III	343
lxxi	15	III	70, I
lxxi	16	II	378
lxxiii	22	II	248
lxxvii	17	III	430, I
lxxviii	38	I	105
lxxxix	3	III	323
lxxxix	15, 16	II	379
xciv	9	II	207
ciii	1, 3	III	407
civ	16	III	180
cxxxiii	2	III	263
cxxxv	7	III	28, 9

TEXTS *Illustrated.*

CHAP.	VER.	VOL.	PAGE
cxxxix	4	III	99
cxxxix	14	II	186, 227
cxliii	2	II	49
cxliv	2	III	390
cxlvii	16	I	103

PROV.

i	24, 25	II	255
vi	10	II	252
vii	27	III	6
viii	6	I	35
xxi	1	III	101
xxii	15	II	134, 5
xxv	11	I	33
xxx	2	II	247
xxxi	21	II	183

ECCLES.

vii	6	I	11
xii	3	II	169, 171
xii	4	II	208
xii	6	II	171, 199

CANTIC.

i	9	II	384
ii	9	I	114
ii	11, 12, 13	I	73, 4
ii	14	III	145
iii	6	III	464
iv	1	II	177
iv	2	II	189
iv	3	II	186
vi	10	III	123

ISA.

i	27	II	381
ii	11	I	393
iv	6	III	432
v	26	III	478
vi	3, &c.	I	384
vii	3	III	178
vii	23	III	288
ix	6	I	232
ix	6	III	339
x	33, 34	III	504, 5
xi	1	III	505

TEXTS *Illustrated.*

CHAP.	VER.	VOL.	PAG.
xi	3	II	210
xi	10	III	508
xiii	19, &c.	II	108, 9
xiv	23	II	110
xxvi	7	II	253
xxvi	8, 9	II	328, 9
xxvii	4	I	151
xxviii	7	II	238
xxviii	12	II	394
xxviii	15	III	478
xxviii	16	II	403, &c.
xxviii	18	I	103
xxix	4, 5, 6	III	142, 3
xxx	18	III	423
xxxii	18, 19	III	149, 50
xxxiii	16	III	144
xxxvi	12	II	182
xl	22	II	260
xl	22	III	283
xlii	1	II	308
xlii	6	I	175
xlii	6, 7	III	383
xliii	25	III	319
xliv	22	III	510
xl	22	III	115
xl	24	II	381, 2
xl	2	II	102
l	2	III	98
l	10	III	403
li	6	II	385
li	9, 10	III	134
lii	7	III	203, 4
lii	13	III	92
lii	15	I	94
liii	4	I	142
liii	5	I	138
liii	6	I	133, 4
liii	6	III	377
liii	11	I	336
liv	5	III	267, 8
lx	7	III	516
lx	17	III	482
lxi	1	I	209
lxi	10	II	384
lxiv	6	II	358

TEXTS *Illustrated.*

J E R E M.

CHAP.	VER.	VOL.	PAG.
iii	22	III	389
iv	19, &c.	III	493
v	22	III	125
viii	2	II	255
xvii	9	II	141
xxiii	5, 6	II	390
xxiii	5, 6	III	118
xlvi	3	III	496, 7

E Z E K.

xvi	6	III	329
xviii	27	I	281

D A N.

iii	1	II	105
ix	9	III	341
ix	24	II	87, 8

H O S.

ii	19, 20	III	267
ii	23	III	413
vii	8	III	453
xi	4	III	220
xiv	5	I	43

J O E L

ii	3	III	476
ii	8	III	477

A M O S

iv	13	III	98, 9
----	----	-----	-------

J O N A H

i	4	III	97
ii	6	III	160
iii	5	III	380

M I C A H

vi	7, 8	I	341
vii	19	III	207

H A B A K.

i	14	III	169
iii	3, &c.	III	84, 5

TEXTS *Illustrated.*

CHAP.	VER.	VOL.	PAG.
iii	4	III	144, 5
iii	II	III	495
iii	19	III	408

Z E C H.

iii	3, 4, 5	II	59
iii	9, 10	III	46, 7
iv	2, 3, 12	III	263
vi	12, 13	II	61
ix	9	II	390, I
xi	10	I	225
xiii	I	III	512
xiii	7	I	199
xiii	7	III	87
xiv	6, 7	II	286, 7

H A G.

ii	7	II	371
----	---	----	-----

M A L.

iii	16, 17	I	13
iv	2	III	529

M A T T.

v	3	I	289
v	16	I	229
v	20	I	289, 90
v	44	II	340
vi	20	III	492
vi	33	II	409
viii	22	II	146
viii	26	III	97, 8
ix	13	III	330, I
xii	41	I	269
xiv	24	III	96, 7
xvi	24	II	310
xvii	17	III	443
xvii	27	III	96
xviii	32	III	320
xix	17	I	90, I
xxii	11	III	311
xxv	40	I	286, 7
xxvi	41	III	59
xxvii	9	III	113

MARK

TEXTS *Illustrated.*

MARK

CHAP.	VER.	VOL.	PAG.
ii	14	III	101
iv	39	I	72
v	9	I	150
vi	51	I	272
vii	22	II	280, 1
viii	37	III	63
ix	3	I	127, 8
ix	6	III	201
xi	20	III	95
xiv	13	III	99
xvi	14	III	444

LUKE

i	35	III	46
ii	46	I	252
vi	12	II	159
vii	21	III	52
viii	24	I	271, 2
x	30, 30c.	I	29, 30c.
xii	50	III	55
xvi	9	III	492
xvi	12	III	492
xvi	15	I	378
xvii	9	I	315
xvii	30	I	330
xviii	13, 14	II	50
xix	48	I	16
xxiii	34	III	60
xxiv	25	III	444
xxiv	32	I	10
xxiv	47	III	333, 4

JOHN

i	12	II	85
i	14	II	224
i	47	I	308
ii	14, 30c.	III	100
ii	25	III	99
iii	6	II	146
iii	12	I	111, 2
iii	16	I	163
iii	18, 36	I	283
iii	33	III	442
iv	6	III	51
v	17, 18, 19	III	106, 7
v	40	III	317

TEXTS *Illustrated.*

CHAP.	VER.	VOL.	PAG.
vi	32	III	381, 2
vi	35	II	84
vi	44	II	259
xi	50	I	141
xiv	30	III	62
xv	5	III	266, 7
xv	6	I	349, 50
xv	15	III	265
xvi	8, &c.	II	431, 2
xvii	4	III	63
xvii	24	II	62
xvii	24	III	75

ACTS

ii	39	III	375, 6
iii	8	III	93
iii	14	III	67
iv	26	I	67, 8
v	41	III	222
ix	11	III	202
x	35	I	284
xi	18	I	320
xiii	38	I	332
xvii	27	II	214
xviii	17	II	313, 4
xix	21	III	234, 5
xx	28	I	172
xxvi	25	I	67, 8

ROM.

i	16, 17	II	411, 2
i	17	III	451, 2
ii	15	II	265
iii	19	II	135
iii	20	II	25, 413
iii	21, 22	II	367
iii	24	I	325
iii	25, 26	I	154, 5
iii	31	II	414
iv	3	II	77, &c.
iv	4	II	16
iv	5	I	222
iv	6, 7	II	415, 6
iv	14	II	14
iv	21	III	365
v	16	III	71

TEXTS *Illustrated.*

CHAP.	VER.	VOL.	PAG.
v	8	I	163
v	12	I	201
v	14	III	264
v	17	II	418
v	17	III	70
v	18	II	52
v	19	II	419
v	21	II	52, 352
vi	6	II	230
vii	9	II	25
vii	18	II	145
viii	3	II	23
viii	5	II	420
viii	7	II	145
ix	30, &c.	II	424, 5
x	3	II	422
x	4	II	427, 8
xi	6	II	16

I COR.

i	30	II	426
ii	7	I	82
ii	14	II	248
iii	8	I	284
iii	22	III	526
v	7	I	91
vi	11	II	427
vi	19	II	225
vi	20	II	223
vii	1	III	222
xii	12, &c.	II	201, &c.
xv	47	I	203
xv	52	II	398, 9

2 COR.

i	20	III	522
iii	6	II	28
iii	7	II	9, 10
iv	17	I	26
v	1	II	168
v	4	II	289
v	14	I	140
v	14	III	222
v	20	III	434, 5
v	21	II	434, 5
vi	8, 9, 10	III	153
vii	10	III	216
viii	2	III	228
viii	12	II	20
xii	7	II	277, 8

GAL.

TEXTS *Illustrated.*

G A L.

CHAP.	VER.	VOL.	PAG.
i	7	II	14
ii	15, 16	II	433
ii	19	II	306, 7
ii	21	II	13
iii	10	II	17, 18, 39, 42
iii	13	I	143
iii	23	II	36
iii	24	II	10

E P H.

i	7	I	161, 2
i	8	I	176
i	13	III	457
i	21	III	270
ii	3	II	149
ii	3	II	230
ii	8	I	313
ii	12	II	65, 6
iii	12	III	426
iii	18	III	455
iii	19	III	57
iv	16	II	221

P H I L.

i	10, 11	I	311
ii	6	III	87
ii	8	II	56, 224
iii	3	III	520, 1
iii	7, 8, 9	II	78
iii	8, 9	II	437, 64

C O L.

i	21	II	147
ii	2	III	275
ii	9, 10	III	116, 7
iii	16	I	34

I T H E S S.

i	3	I	356
---	---	---	-----

I T I M.

TEXTS *Illustrated.*

I TIM.

CHAP.	VER.	VOL.	PAG.
i	15	III	370
ii	6	I	140
iii	16	I	295

2 TIM.

i	12	III	525
ii	6	III	347
iii	16	II	429
iv	8	III	327

TIT.

i	15	I	352
iii	3, &c.	I	345, 6, 7
iii	3	II	235, 259
iii	8	I	227

HEB.

i	3	III	63
ii	10	I	182
ii	12	III	266
iii	6	III	410
iii	14	III	273
iv	12	I	368
vi	17, 18	III	440
vi	22	I	220
viii	5	I	121
viii	10, &c.	I	178
viii	10	II	66, 7
ix	15	I	107
ix	16, 17	III	315
x	14	I	109
x	19	III	520
x	20	I	119
x	37	II	447
xi	1	III	398, 9
xi	17	III	254, &c.
xii	13	III	408
xii	2	II	85
xiii	12	I	182

JAM.

i	6	III	427
ii	21, 24	I	293, 4
iii	9	II	150
iii	13	I	2
iii	15	II	275
v	17	II	285

I PET.

TEXTS *Illustrated.*

1 PET.

CHAP.	VER.	VOL.	PAG.
i	2	I	343, 4
i	13	III	410
ii	24	I	139
iii	18	III	371
v	7	III	433, 4

2 PET.

i	1	II	408, 9
i	7	III	223
iii	5	III	180

1 JOHN

i	9	I	184
ii	1	III	512, 3
iii	7	I	295
iii	16	III	448
iii	23	III	435
iv	10	III	422
v	9	III	400

2 JOHN

6	III	222
---	-----	-----

JUDE

19	II	148
----	----	-----

REV.

iii	15	III	453
iii	18	II	393
iii	20	III	291
iv	5	III	90
iv	7	III	355
v	9, &c.	III	90, 2
vii	14, 15	I	392
viii	8, 9	III	131
xii	11	III	525
xiv	13	I	347
xviii	1	III	105
xx	11	III	110
xxii	17	III	434

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